

Polisario, non-aligned assail U.N. plan

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The U.N.'s criteria for Saharan voter eligibility to determine the future of Western Sahara drew strident criticism Monday from the Polisario nationalist movement and non-aligned nations. The Security Council examined Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar's latest report on the process, which proposed several wide loopholes for voter eligibility that the occupying power, Morocco, could hypothetically exploit. Morocco annexed Western Sahara in 1975 after Spain gave it up, but has had to fight a war with the Polisario Front, which wants independence for the territory. Mr. Perez de Cuellar's report would allow voting rights to the child of a Saharan father born in the territory, if the person is now at least 18 years old, and would let other persons vote if they could show they had been residents of the territory prior to 1974. Polisario, the Organisation of African Unity — which recognises Polisario — and many members of the Non-Aligned Movement fear these criteria are too loose, and say the United Nations should rely strictly on the last census, conducted by Spain in 1974.

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Arafat in Alma Ata

MOSCOW (AP) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat arrived in the Kazakhstani capital of Alma Ata Monday. TASS reported. The Soviet news agency said Mr. Arafat's visit is part of his tour of Asian countries that includes China, Vietnam and Laos. TASS said Mr. Arafat was scheduled to meet Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev. It gave no other details of his visit.

German air crash toll rises to 28

HEIDELBERG, Germany (AP) — Police Monday revised the death toll from the crash of a DC-3 plane, saying 28 people died. Authorities said that 27 people died in the crash Sunday near Heidelberg but the toll was increased when it was discovered there were more people aboard the plane than originally thought. There were four survivors. Authorities were investigating the cause of the crash. The plane was operated by Classic Wings, a company which provides "nostalgia" flights to aviation buffs.

Turkish troops kill 11 rebel Kurds

ANKARA (R) — Turkish troops killed 11 separatist Kurdish rebels in a series of clashes in southeastern Turkey, the semi-official Anatolian news agency said Monday. It said the clashes with the guerrillas of the outlawed Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) took place in a mountainous area between Solhan town in Bingol and Kulp town in Diyarbakir province during an operation which began on Saturday. Rebel sources said the 11 were killed when Turkish fighter planes bombed a guerrilla camp in the region on Saturday. More than 3,000 people have been killed since mid-1984 when the PKK launched a campaign for an independent Kurdish state in southeast Turkey.

Egyptian held with stolen antiquities

CAIRO (R) — A jeweller from Alexandria has been arrested on charges of possessing 3,158 stolen antiquities dating from the Pharaonic, Roman, and Islamic periods, security sources said Monday. They said the pieces, including statues, heads of statues, gold and silver amulets, textiles and stone weapons, appeared on records at the Egyptian Organisation of Antiquities and had been stolen from various places around the country.

Sudan, Ethiopia need 1.5m tonnes of food

NAIROBI (AP) — Ethiopia and Sudan will need more than 1.5 million tonnes of food in 1992 despite above average harvests this year, a U.N. agency said Monday. The U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) said 6.1 million drought victims, displaced people and demobilised soldiers and their families in Ethiopia will need 880,000 tonnes of emergency food. In Sudan, the agency said, 662,000 tonnes of food will be needed to help feed 7.1 million victims of drought, war and natural calamities. The FAO forecast 1991-92 production of major cereals in Sudan at 3.8 million tonnes, 1.8 million tonnes more than in 1990-91. But it said 27 per cent of the population will still require help.

Aid flight turned back from Mogadishu

NAIROBI (AP) — A Belgian air force transport plane carrying emergency aid to Somalia's embattled capital was forced to turn back Monday by fighting around the airport, aid officials said. Salah Dabbakeh of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Nairobi described Monday's fighting in Mogadishu as the heaviest since November. "It is very intense with heavy shelling," he said, adding that forces loyal to President Ali Mahdi Muhammad were apparently trying to recapture the airport from troops of General Mohammed Farrah Aidid, chairman of the ruling United Somali Congress Party.

Palestinians press U.S. to act to avoid impasse

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Palestinian peace negotiators pressed the United States Monday to step in and break the Middle East peace deadlock at the next round of Arab-Israeli negotiations in Washington. "Although we feel that the American position practically serves the Israeli objectives, we believe that it is not too late for the U.S. to take a stand which would preserve the peace process," said Faisal Al Hussein, overall head of the Palestinian delegation.

"It is clear that Israel is trying to make the most from this (U.S.) position of non-intervention to stall and delay, in addition to its practices on the ground which all aim at stripping the peace process of its credibility," Mr. Hussein told reporters at an Arab East Jerusalem news conference. The peace talks, jointly sponsored by Washington and Moscow, were launched on Oct. 30 with a formal opening ceremony followed by brief bilateral talks in Madrid. The talks resumed in Washington but were adjourned last week after six days. Israel refused to accept the independent negotiating status of the Palestinians. But all parties have agreed to

return to Washington for a new round of talks opening on Jan. 7. Israel had insisted that Palestinians and Jordanians take part as a joint delegation in talks on an interim period of self-rule for nearly two million Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied territories. Palestinians, referring to an agreement with the United States, insisted they alone were entitled to talk with Israel about Palestinian issues while Jordan would discuss demarcation of their common border. Their negotiations never left the corridors of the U.S. State Department.

"Attempting to neutralise the role of the co-sponsors is a violation of the agreement and is also a way in which the process turned into a biased approach in favour of Israel," delegation spokeswoman Hanan Ashrawi said. Israeli Prime Minister David Levy told a parliamentary committee Monday he had proposed a compromise to the United States over the impasse on who would participate in talks on interim self-rule for Palestinians in the occupied territories. Sources in the powerful foreign affairs and defence committee said Mr. Levy had proposed that all parties to the talks accept the

principle of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation which will later divide into committees. Mr. Levy told parliament members that each committee will discuss issues relevant to it, the sources said. The Palestinian negotiators crossed from Jordan to the occupied West Bank on Sunday. They described their talks with the Israelis as "exploratory meetings" and denied that they had failed.

Delegates accused Israel of trying to torpedo peace talks by stalling during the Washington talks and by stepping up Jewish settlements in the occupied territories. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir fired what commentators called the opening shots in the 1992 election campaign at a Likud meeting with a vehement attack on left-wing opponents who advocate giving back occupied territories in return for peace with the Arabs.

"The highest obligation with the highest priority which is now entrusted to the Likud... is to fight the political battle for the safeguarding, security and wholeness of the land of Israel," Mr. Shamir said in a speech late on Sunday.

Shamir and Levy flex their muscles in Likud

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir Monday showed his muscles when his Likud bloc early Monday overwhelmingly rejected an electoral reform proposal that would lead to direct election of the premier. The vote by the central committee of the right-wing Likud was seen as a victory for Mr. 76-year-old leader, who had appealed to delegates to oppose the bill (see page 2).

But a vote on a separate party issue demonstrated that Foreign Minister David Levy, the leading moderate in Mr. Shamir's cabinet on Arab-Israeli peace moves, commands hefty support in the Likud. Mr. Levy has been at odds with Mr. Shamir over the peace process since it was revived by the United States last March. He suffered a humiliation last October when Mr. Shamir decided to lead the Israeli delegation to the Madrid peace conference, effectively sidelining Mr. Levy. But Mr. Levy demonstrated his political clout Sunday by mustering a 53-per cent majority of block passage of Likud's new constitution. Mr. Levy argued that the constitution was ill-

prepared. The vote to block electoral reform was carried by 74 per cent after more than 10-hour meeting in Tel Aviv.

The committee meeting was closely watched here as a guideline to the balance of forces in Likud. Israeli newspapers interpreted the results to mean Mr. Shamir, by defeating the electoral reform, remains firmly in command, but that Mr. Levy can also claim a power base. "It showed that Shamir can run the government without Levy but he can't run the Likud without Levy. Levy has a veto," said an observer.

Mr. Levy, who pressed the government to enter peace talks when Mr. Shamir was reluctant, is one of the leading contenders to succeed the prime minister. "Everybody eulogised my camp. They said it didn't exist, it was weakened, and here you eyes see reality," Mr. Levy exclaimed after the vote.

The electoral reform issue rose out of widespread protests over the financial and political horse-trading Mr. Shamir had engaged in last year to woo half a dozen small parties into his coalition.

Demjanjuk accuses Israel, U.S. of cold-blooded plot

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — The Israeli defence lawyer for convicted Nazi war criminal John Demjanjuk Monday accused Israel and the United States of a "cold-blooded plot" to conceal evidence that could prove his client's innocence.

Yoram Sheftel made the accusation during a stormy 4½-hour supreme court hearing on Mr. Demjanjuk's appeal of his conviction and death sentence for being the camp guard known as "Ivan the Terrible".

Prosecutor Michael Shaked denied Mr. Sheftel's accusation, and the justices accused the defence lawyer of over-dramatising the 71-year-old Demjanjuk's appeal.

Mr. Demjanjuk, looking fit in brown slacks and a sweater, said as he entered the court, his hands handcuffed in front. He told reporters "I feel good today" and then was silent during the session. Five justices heard Mr. Sheftel's account of new evidence he submitted in August, which he said U.S. officials and prosecutor had hidden from the defence since 1978. Mr. Sheftel says the testimony from more than 20 Ukrainian guards at the Treblinka camp in Nazi-occupied Poland shows the notorious "Ivan the Terrible" was not Mr. Demjanjuk but another man named Ivan Marchenko. Mr. Demjanjuk, a retired auto worker from the Seven Hills suburb of Cleveland, Ohio, was convicted in April 1988 of being the guard Ivan who operated gas chambers at Treblinka, where 850,000 people perished in 1942-1943.

He was sentenced to death for crimes against humanity and crimes against the Jewish people. He appealed in 1989.

Mr. Demjanjuk insists he is victim of mistaken identity and was a prisoner of war camp elsewhere in Poland during the period in question. Mr. Sheftel says evidence taken from other Treblinka guards by Soviet authorities during the 1940s through 1960s shores up the claim. He submitted the evidence in August and alleged that prosecutors had access to the material as far back as 1978 but concealed it.

"It turns out we were not dealing with a problem of mistaken identity, but a step by step plot for more than 13 years," Mr. Sheftel said. He also accused authorities in the United States of "deceit and destroying evidence, all in a cold-blooded plot."

The United States extradited Mr. Demjanjuk for trial in Israel in 1986, after stripping him of American citizenship in 1981. Mr. Sheftel argued that the U.S. Justice Department had ignored testimony it had at the time from the other Treblinka guards. Mr. Sheftel, in an ironic twist, compared the Demjanjuk trial to the Dreyfus affair, the conviction of a Jewish officer in the French army in the 1890s on treason charges later found to be false and motivated by anti-Semitism. Controversy over the case led Theodor Herzl, an Austrian Jew, to found Zionism, the ideology that led to the creation of Israel.

Freij rejects call for strike

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — An angry Mayor Elias Freij called Monday for residents of Bethlehem and neighbouring Christian towns to ignore a Christmas Eve strike called by local Palestinian activists.

Bethlehem and its Church of the Nativity are the focal points of annual celebrations commemorating the birth of Christ. Mr. Freij, a Christian who was a Palestinian delegate at peace talks in Madrid and Washington, issued his appeal after a leaflet signed by "the National Forces in Bethlehem" was circulated in the town.

The pamphlet called for shops and offices to close on Dec. 24, Christmas Eve for Latin Rite churches, and Jan. 6 when Orthodox Churches celebrate Christmas.

It cited the suffering of Palestinians "from the oppression of Israeli military occupation" and "the pain and suffering of Iraqi children" following the Gulf war. The pamphlet, apparently from Bethlehem activists, contradicted calls by leaders of the Palestinian uprising and the Muslim fundamentalist Hamas movement for shops and restaurants to stay open on Christmas Eve. Mr. Freij told Israel Radio that

(Continued on page 5)

Beirut body identified as Higgins'

BEIRUT (AP) — U.S. and U.N. officials positively identified the body of slain American hostage William R. Higgins Monday, the director of the American University Hospital (AUH) said. The body, in a casket draped with the U.S. flag, was immediately driven out of the hospital's morgue in an ambulance escorted by two U.S. embassy cars. The convoy sped away in the direction of the embassy in the east Beirut suburb of Auhar. Hospital director Dr. Faisal Najjar said: "U.N. and U.S. officials who examined the body after coroner General Dr. Ahmad Harati performed a second examination of the corpse have reached positive identification."

Among the U.N. officials who helped in the investigation were soldiers who knew Lieutenant-Colonel Higgins because they had worked under his command in the peacekeeping observer group he headed. U.S. Ambassador Ryan Crocker earlier met with Interior Minister Sami Khatib, and the latter revealed that an anonymous caller who led

police officers to the body Saturday night had said the remains were those of Col. Higgins before hanging up. There was no immediate comment from U.S. officials in Beirut after Dr. Najjar made his announcement. A receptionist at the embassy said any statements would be made by Mr. Crocker, and that he would be unavailable for several hours. The Organisation of the Oppressed on Earth claimed July 31, 1989, that it killed the 44-year-old Vietnam veteran to avenge Israel's abduction of a Shiite Muslim cleric. The return of Col. Higgins' body was another successful step in the hostage negotiations of U.N. envoy Giandomenico Pico, who returned to the region last week. The envoy has won the release of all American and British hostages in Lebanon since August. The last American captive, journalist Terry Anderson, was freed Dec. 4 after more than 6½ years in captivity. Two Germans, Heinrich Struberg and Thomas Kempner, still are being

morgue briefly Sunday saw the body of the fair-skinned man lying in a draw. No. 3, covered with a white sheet. Much of the light hair was sullied by the head in a crew cut. The facial features appeared to be those of a Westerner. There were black stains around the neck, and a morgue attendant said these were blood stains. Col. Higgins was kidnapped Feb. 17, 1988 near Tyre, 80 kilometres south of Beirut. He headed the U.N. Truce Supervisory Organisation, a 76-man observer force that monitors the Lebanese-Israeli border. The body was found by a police patrol lying in a street in south Beirut, wrapped in a beige and blue wool blanket. The anonymous caller, Mr. Khatib said, told police that the body was dumped in Rweis street. The caller then hung up. Dr. Harati, the coroner general, said the body had been "wrapped in cotton and bandages," in an attempt to preserve it. "From what I've seen of the neck, it looks like there was an attempt to embalm the body, but it was poorly done," he added. An AP reporter allowed into the

Iraqi families face bleak Christmas under sanctions

BAGHDAD (R) — "Anything," says 12-year-old Zafaran when asked what he wants for Christmas.

But his parents are having enough trouble putting food on the table in the tiny room they share with Zafaran and their four other children.

This Christmas, just like their first under U.N. sanctions, there will be no presents under a small plastic tree. "My brother used to give the children gifts but now nobody has any money," said Zafaran's 49-year-old father, who earns 180 dinars a month as a labourer. That is \$18 on the black market and \$550 at universally discounted official rates. Rent in a crumbling house shared with four other families is \$7, leaving them only enough for a few kilos of stringy meat. Before Iraq's August 1990 invasion of Kuwait, 180 dinars covered the family's monthly expenses. But the U.N.-enforced economic isolation of Iraq sent prices skyrocketing. Zafaran and his family live in the teeming, mainly Christian working-class neighbourhood of Battaween, which was once one of Baghdad's most exclusive areas. Unofficial sources estimate that about 700,000 of Iraq's 18 million people are Christians. Despite the December cold children walk barefoot among the rubbish-strewn streets. A black-robed young woman with the face of a Madonna sits on the pavement selling eggs few can afford. Zafaran's mother has hung statues and portraits of the Virgin Mary above the one bed in a room heated only by a kerosene lamp. She says her children have not had new clothes for a year. "We have saved two chickens from our rations for dinner on Christmas," Zafaran told Reuters as he spoke of feasts, new clothes and visits to relatives when he was younger. The limited rations of flour,

sugar and other staples which the government distributes to every Iraqi resident are keeping people alive but not well. The United Nations says the death rate for children under five has doubled since before the Gulf war over Kuwait. Some say Iraqi figures that 80,000 children have died of hunger and disease may be accurate. The cash-starved Iraqi government has rejected as inadequate U.N. proposals to allow it to sell oil for food and medicine. It is pressing for countries to unfreeze billions of dollars of its assets to allow it to buy supplies. "Definitely the situation is getting worse," said Douglas Broderick, whose Catholic Relief Services feed 100,000 people in Iraq. "The frightening thing is that more and more people are coming to us for food — people aren't ashamed any more to come and stand in a bread line for two or three hours."

The issue is ... asking one group of people, Arabs, to evacuate to put in another group of people, who are Jewish, in their place," Stephen Langfur, an Israeli who formed a committee to help the bedouins, told a news conference Monday. But the government said it offered compensation of 20,000 shekels (\$8,330) per acre and one-eighth of an acre of land in a neighbouring Arab village for each of the 17 families. "We made them a generous offer even though legally, they are not entitled to anything," said Amikam Shapira, spokesman of the land authority. The government argues that the bedouins settled in Ramya "illegally." Ramya's residents say the village was a traditional bedouin camp where they moved periodically in the 1960s when they ended their nomadic ways. It is one of 120 Arab villages that Israel wants to shut down. The bedouins of Ramya took the dispute to Israel's supreme court, and in November the court ordered both sides to negotiate a settlement.

Baghdad invites Kurds to discuss blockade

SALAHUDDIN, Iraq (R) — Kurdish leaders said Monday the Iraqi government had invited them to Baghdad to discuss its two-month economic blockade of northern Iraq.

Sources at Massoud Barzani's Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) headquarters said the invitation came in response to a letter from Mr. Barzani saying Kurdish leaders had agreed to guarantee the safety of government employees in Kurdistan, an Iraqi condition for lifting the blockade.

They said Mr. Barzani received the invitation late last week. Ten days ago, when Kurdish leaders voted to guarantee the safety of government employees, they set Dec. 23 as the deadline for Baghdad to lift the blockade. The deadline arrived with no evidence of Iraqi compliance. Salaries of most government employees in Kurdistan have not

been paid by Baghdad and fuel and food deliveries have been interrupted. Price increases of 300 per cent for some food staples and severe fuel shortages are bringing real hardship to the poor. Better-off Kurds have been inconvenienced but a booming black market has developed to meet their needs. Kurdish leaders visited Baghdad last month but failed to get the blockade lifted.

Advisors to Mr. Barzani said he was not likely to go to Baghdad himself this time but could send a representative. Mr. Barzani's chief political rival, Jalal Talabani, who heads the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, told Reuters last week he had no plans to go to the Baghdad to discuss anything.

Mr. Barzani and Mr. Talabani have been at odds over the merits of a draft autonomy agreement the KDP chief brought back from

Baghdad in August. Kurds say the government blockade seems intended to pressure them into signing the agreement.

Hakim presents plan

Iraqi Shiite opposition leader Ayatollah Mohammad Baqer Al Hakim said Monday he had invited leading dissidents to Damascus this week to discuss ousting President Saddam Hussein.

"All elements of detonation are available in Iraq, they need only the trigger," Sheikh Hakim, leader of the Tehran-based Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), told a news conference.

SCIRI played a major role in a failed rebellion against the government in southern Iraq last March. Sheikh Hakim said his plan

stressed the unity of the Iraqi people and territory and sought to activate opposition within the ranks of the army and establish political pluralism.

"Some of the opposition leaders have already arrived here and others are expected today and tomorrow," Sheikh Hakim said. Those invited to the talks included representatives of the Kurdish groups who staged a parallel revolt in northern Iraq in March and control much of the Iraqi Kurdish region.

Mr. Talabani last week called for the overthrow of President Saddam and said he and other opposition groups were working together to topple the Iraqi president.

More than 60 Iraqi opposition groups seek President Saddam's fall but ethnic, religious and ideological differences divide them.

Jordan seeks its water rights from Mideast peace talks

By Rana Sabbagh Reuter

AMMAN — Parched Jordan hopes Middle East peace talks will provide an opportunity to settle long-disputed water rights with its neighbours on the Jordan River basin, officials said Monday.

Arab states, including Jordan, are due to hold multi-lateral talks with Israel in Moscow at the end of January and water will be high on the agenda.

Jordanian officials say a 1955 plan drawn up by former U.S. envoy Eric Johnston on the exploitation of the Jordan River tributaries by Jordan, Lebanon, Israel and Syria should be a starting point in any future talks on water sharing.

"We are talking about water rights to sustain agricultural practices, industrial and domestic needs in Jordan and

a clean environment," Water Minister Samir Kassar told Reuters when asked how much water his country hoped to get from a peace treaty.

"We are talking about basic rights. What it takes we calculate later," he said.

Jordan says it is facing a severe water crisis due to drought, a population boom, the needs of farmers and the actions of water-hungry neighbours Syria and Israel.

Both countries border Jordan along the Yarmouk River, a 40-kilometre tributary of the Jordan River that is a major source of the country's water.

Although the pact was never formally signed by Israel and Arab countries which with it was officially at war, the water quotas in the U.S.-brokered Johnston agreement were initially honoured. On paper, it gives Jordan

500 million cubic metres a year, 220 million cubic metres for the West Bank subsequently seized by Israel in the 1967 war, 567 million cubic metres for Israel, 132 million cubic metres for Syria and 35 million cubic metres for Lebanon.

But Jordan says it is not getting its share.

"We are getting 120 million cubic metres per annum from the Yarmouk River," Mr. Kassar said. The rest is drawn from rain dependent wadis and artesian wells.

Syria is taking up to 170 million cubic metres a year and Israel is consuming at least 737 million cubic metres, other water officials said.

Jordan, whose population is growing at 3.8 per cent a year, is consuming 750 million cubic metres a year — it had to absorb a sudden influx of 300,000 Jordanians who

fled Kuwait and other neighbouring states during the 1990 Gulf crisis.

Mr. Kassar said he expected a water shortage of 60 million cubic metres in 1992 for municipal and industrial use, compared to this year's deficit of 35 million cubic metres.

This shortage is expected to escalate from 1993 onwards and providing water will also become more costly, officials say.

"The only way to cover this shortage is by having more share of the Yarmouk River," Mr. Kassar said.

The river flows from Syria, along the border with Jordan, and the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights, and runs briefly between Jordan and Israel before bending south-west to join the Jordan River.

Mr. Kassar said Amman was also looking into the possibility of drawing water

from its underground aquifers at Al Dissi in the south, near the border with Saudi Arabia.

Desalination of sea water was not viable in Jordan because the country has no sources of cheap energy.

Jordan and Syria signed a landmark agreement in September 1987 to build a \$330-million dam on their frontier to irrigate the Jordan Valley and generate hydro-electric power for Syria.

But complications, including Israel's protests, blocked World Bank financing of the long-delayed plan and vast tracts of potentially-rich farmland in the Jordan Valley remain unwatered.

Arab-Israeli wrangles over water sharing and political tension with Syria have killed successive projects to dam the Yarmouk, which experts say is the only remaining uncontrolled water resource in the basin.

Algeria poised between ideals of Islamic state and Democracy

ALGIERS (R) — Algeria Monday wound up an electoral campaign many thought would never take place, its leaders urging the 25 million people to secure democracy as a way of life at general elections on Thursday.

At stake in the country's first free general election appears the choice between a fundamentalist Islamic state or a multi-party parliament driving a liberal society with a free-market economy.

It is a poll where cabinet members and Prime Minister Sidahmad Ghazali are not seeking seats although some diplomats suggest Mr. Ghazali could be at least temporarily recalled by the president if no party emerged clear winner.

Local rather than party loyalties in small communities could also dictate the outcome.

Calling for a massive turnout, the cabinet said after a weekend meeting: "If Algerian men and women vote, Algeria will be the main winner, an Algeria of democracy and liberties."

Scheduled for June, the election was put off after militants of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), the main opposition party, clashed with security forces and 55 people died.

The FIS demands a state ruled by Islamic law. Its militants demanded it there and then, without a vote.

Thursday's vote is across a country more than four times the size of France, its ex-colonial ruler across the Mediterranean.

Like Algeria's neighbours Tunisia and Morocco, which see the experiment as an aberration, the outcome is being carefully watched in France, home to around one million Algerians.

Forty nine parties are taking part, from among 58 registered in the last three years of hectic reform introduced by President Chadli Benjedid after riots in 1988.

But the poll for a 430-seat, five-year assembly is dominated by two—the FIS and the National Liberation Front (FLN) whose traditional supporters fought an eight-year war for independence and which ruled a one-party state for nearly three decades.

The FLN sees itself as champion of continued reform and unity, and has already urged a post-poll coalition government.

"It's an election for or against Islamic fundamentalism," one Western diplomat said.

The 31,901 voting booths, including 556 mobile posts, open at 8 a.m. Dec. 26 and close at 7 p.m., although local officials can vary the hours to help the poll.

Results are expected to start arriving overnight, with the Constitutional Council making a definitive statement after the Jan. 16 second round. This is for areas where no candidate gained an outright majority. In a dead heat on Jan. 16, the seat goes to the oldest candidate.

The 13.3 million electors have a choice of 5,712 candidates, including some 1,000 independents.

Fifty-seven women are standing. Few will forecast the poll outcome. Western diplomats see the FIS probably emerging as the biggest party but without an overall majority.

The FLN is seen as a solid runner-up, with the Socialist Forces Front, led by veteran independence fighter Hocine Ait Ahmed, as a likely third force, followed by a few others.

Mr. Ghazali, appointed to get elections back on track, and asked for his forecast recently, said: "I don't know. It seems to me that no one can suggest a score. But I am sure that no party will gain a majority of 51 per cent."

Cabinet members are not standing for election, although President Benjedid is not bound to select a new prime minister from any particular party.

The FIS which has shown itself well organised was holding a final mass rally in Algiers on Monday in the July 5 stadium it usually fills with bussed-in supporters.

Some other leaders have complained of their meetings being disrupted by bearded militants, and newspapers reported the appearance of forged ballot papers in one area, with a cross by the FIS candidate's name.

The government has promised "fair and clean" elections, backed itself with tough new laws to control any unrest, and says its security measures will ensure the vote goes smoothly.



Members of 'Kabane Chai' demonstrate outside the U.S. consulate in Arab East Jerusalem after the acquittal of Al Sayyid Nosair in the murder trial of Meir Kahane.

Militant Jews demand new trial for Nosair

NEW YORK (R) — Militant Jewish groups called for revenge Sunday after an Egyptian-born Muslim was acquitted of murdering radical rabbi Meir Kahane.

"I never expected justice from an American court... on this day, we the people of Kahane Chai promise the revenge of the blood of rabbi Meir Kahane," said a statement by Kahane's son, Binyamin, who heads the Kahane Chai, a group dedicated to his father's work.

Al Sayyid Nosair, 36, was acquitted late Saturday night on the murder charge by a New York jury. But he was found guilty of assault, coercion and weapons charges.

He faces up to 21 years in prison when he is sentenced by New York Supreme Court Judge Alvin Schlesinger on Jan. 29.

Kahane, 58, founded the Jewish Defence League (JDL) in 1968 in the United States. He founded the Kach Party and was elected to the Israeli Knesset in 1984. He was considered a force in Israeli politics until Kach was banned in 1988 because of its undemocratic stance.

The Jewish Defence Organisation, a splinter group of Kahane's JDL, in a statement issued Sunday, called for federal charges to be filed against Mr. Nosair.

"We are demanding federal civil rights charges... this week is being called the week of outrage," said the statement. U.S. federal law provides for prosecutors to bring charges of civil rights violations in some killing cases.

New York state assemblyman Dov Hikind whose Brooklyn district includes the largest number of orthodox Jews in the United States charged that prosecutors bungled the case against Mr. Nosair.

"It was the greatest mis-handling of a serious crime," Mr. Hikind said.

He planned to meet with Senator Alfonse D'Amato, a New York Democrat, and others to ask the Justice Department to investigate any possible violations of the federal civil rights legislation.

Mr. Nosair, who was born in Port Fouad, Egypt, a small city north of Port Said, came to the United States from Egypt in 1981 and became a citizen in 1989.

Right-wing Jewish groups have threatened to march on homes of jurors who found Mr. Nosair not guilty.

"It sounded to me like an open-and-shut case, and the defence sounded laughably amateurish," said Alan Derowitz, an attorney and author of "Clutzpah," a book about anti-Semitism in the United States.

M.T. Mehdi, president of the American-Arab Relations Committee, applauded the verdict.

"There was no single person who had indeed seen the shooting," Mr. Mehdi said.

Mr. Nosair was convicted of four lesser charges: Weapons possession, commandeering a taxi at gunpoint and two assault counts. Defence attorney William Kunstler said he would appeal those convictions.

"I find the verdict somewhat bizarre," said Abraham Foxman, who heads the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, which did not support Kahane's extreme anti-Arab views.

"If they found him innocent, that's one thing. But to find him guilty of lesser charges, raises questions," Mr. Foxman said.

During the five-week trial, witnesses testified they saw Mr. Nosair run from the room with a gun in his hand after Kahane was shot. Two people shot at Mr. Nosair fled — an elderly man and a postal police officer — identified him as the man who shot them.

But defence lawyers successfully argued that no one actually saw Mr. Nosair kill Kahane, and that no evidence directly linked him to the killing. They said Mr. Nosair was running because he was being chased by armed Kahane followers, and it was one of them, firing at Mr. Nosair, who shot the officer.

The defence argued that Mr. Nosair was framed by Kahane followers who killed him in a dispute over money.

Avi Weiss, an activist New York City rabbi, said he disagreed with Kahane's views. "But I am just absolutely stunned and shocked by the verdict," he said.

Members of the militant Jewish Defence League and militants from several other extremist Jewish groups threatened to march on jurors' homes.

Israel gets Soviet ambassador for 9 days

TEL AVIV (AP) — Amid customary diplomatic pomp, the first Soviet ambassador to Israel in 24 years presented his credentials Monday to President Chaim Herzog. But in nine days he will become the ambassador of Russia.

Despite the dismantling of the Soviet Union, an honour guard played the Soviet anthem and the red hammer and sickle flag was hoisted as Ambassador Alexander Bovin was received at Mr. Herzog's residence.

"Perhaps fate has willed that it should take place here in Jerusalem, the last time that the Soviet flag is raised and the Soviet national anthem is played on a state occasion," Mr. Herzog said.

Moscow renewed ties with Israel in October after breaking formal links the 1967 Middle East war.

Mr. Herzog denied Monday's ceremony had a touch of the absurd, saying it was simpler for Mr. Bovin's title to be automatically changed in January than start the procedure of establishing ties with Russia's new foreign office.

Mr. Bovin did not speak to reporters, but an announcement from Mr. Herzog's office said that the new ambassador would become the ambassador of Russia on Jan. 1.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin has announced his republic would take over the diplomatic corps of the disintegrating Soviet

Union. Mr. Bovin was appointed by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.

Mr. Herzog told reporters after the ceremony that he felt Israel was owed a renewal of ties after its treatment by the Soviet Union, which was the backer of Arab states for decades.

"In many ways it is some small recompense to what we went through at the hands of the Soviet government over many, many years," he said. "A debt is being paid back to Israel. There is some justice in the world, and we felt it today."

Also attending the ceremony was Yosef Govrin, who was Israel's ambassador to Moscow when diplomatic ties were cut.

Bulgaria offers to host Mideast multilaterals

CAIRO (AP) — Bulgaria is willing to host Mideast multilateral talks in case they cannot be held as scheduled in Moscow Jan. 28-29, Bulgaria's foreign minister said Monday.

Stoyan Ganev spoke to reporters after relaying the Bulgarian proposal to President Hosni Mubarak.

"We wish to improve and support our relations with Arab countries and we are interested in the peace efforts in the Middle East," Mr. Ganev said.

"I relayed to President Mubarak Bulgaria's proposal to host the multilateral talks between Israel and the Arabs which had been scheduled to be held in Moscow Jan. 28, 29," he said, adding he will repeat the offer in other Arab countries he plans to visit.

Mr. Ganev also invited Mr. Mubarak to visit Bulgaria.

A commonwealth has replaced the old Soviet Union and it will likely honour the invitation for some 32 countries to participate in multilateral Mideast peace talks next month.

Amr Musa, Egypt's foreign minister who attended Ganev's meeting with Mr. Mubarak, said that several countries have offered to host the multilateral talks in case the new commonwealth is unable to do so.

"According to scheduled dates, the bilateral talks will be held in Washington and the multilaterals in Moscow. In case the situation changes, all the parties have to agree on where to hold the talks," Mr. Musa said when asked about the Bulgarian offer to host the talks.

The United States and the Soviet Union co-sponsored the Oct. 30-Nov. 1 Mideast peace conference in Madrid. The first round of bilateral talks between Israel and Arab countries was held in Madrid and the second round ended in Washington last week. The third round of bilateral talks is scheduled for Jan. 7 in Washington.

As co-sponsor, Moscow was chosen as the site for the multilateral talks which will include some 32 countries from the Middle East and Europe and will discuss a wider range of issues like nuclear disarmament in the region and water resources.

Mr. Musa said Egypt was closely following the developments in the new commonwealth. Egypt's ambassador to Moscow, Ahmad Maher, was summoned to Cairo and also met with Mr. Mubarak to discuss the situation and how Egypt will respond to it.

Likud votes against reform in elections

TEL AVIV (AP) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's Likud bloc early Monday overwhelmingly rejected an electoral reform proposal that would lead to direct election of the premier.

The vote by central committee of the right-wing Likud was seen as a victory for the 76-year-old leader, who appealed to delegates to oppose the bill.

It was not clear if the Likud legislators would be bound by their central committee's vote when the electoral reform plan comes before the Knesset, or parliament, a key question for success of the plan.

Mr. Shamir had argued the reform proposal would not improve the government but would lessen chances of Likud's returning to power in elections scheduled next November.

Several potential challengers to Mr. Shamir's leadership of the right-wing party, including Housing Minister Ariel Sharon and Foreign Minister David Levy, supported the move to elect the prime minister in a direct, public vote.

Recent polls have shown that Mr. Shamir would beat Labour Party leader Shimon Peres in such an election. But Mr. Peres is being challenged by former De-

fence Minister Yitzhak Rabin, and polls indicate Mr. Shamir would lose to Mr. Rabin.

Under Israel's present election system, the head of the party capable of forming a coalition is named prime minister.

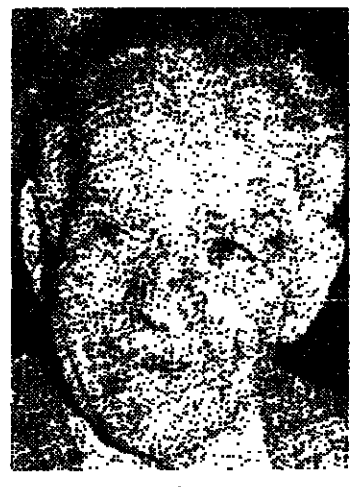
A grassroots electoral reform movement sprang up in Israel following much publicised offers of political jobs and funds for small, religious parties to join a coalition government after indecisive 1990 elections.

The Likud central committee rejected the electoral reform bill by 74 per cent to 26 per cent early Monday after a more than 10-hour meeting in Tel Aviv, the daily Yedioth Ahronoth reported.

The question of imposing Likud Party discipline against electoral reform is likely to be the decisive factor in whether a bill passes the Knesset.

Likud has 37 of the 120 parliamentary seats and the backing of at least a dozen members from nationalist and religious parties. Labour, which has 38 seats, already has instructed its members of vote for reform.

"Every representative of the Likud in the Knesset will certainly have to weigh very hard the decision accepted by the majority



Yitzhak Shamir in the central committee and act accordingly," Police Minister Roni Milo, a Shamir ally, said after the vote.

Israel's next national elections are scheduled Nov. 3, 1992. But the vote could be held sooner if Mr. Shamir's cabinet collapses amid division over the Middle East peace process or a dispute over allocation of government funds to religious institutions.

The far-right Tzomet Party, a member of Mr. Shamir's coalition with two parliamentary seats, said Monday it may pull out of government if Likud legislators are not allowed to vote according to their conscience.

The move would not topple Mr. Shamir's coalition, which has the backing of 66 Knesset members.

Sudan, Ethiopia get together on refugees

KHARTOUM (AP) — Governments of the Horn of Africa are being summoned to discuss the care and welfare of two million refugees in the region, a Sudanese official said Monday.

The conference's cosponsors, Sudan and Ethiopia, face similar hardships, wretched poverty in their own right and a mandate from the world to give a decent life to hundreds of thousands of outsiders.

Osman Al Sayed, Sudan's ambassador to Ethiopia, said Somalia, Djibouti, Kenya and the interim government of Eritrea are being invited to the conference. International relief organisations from the United Na-

tions and elsewhere as well as Western donors also are being invited, he said.

Mr. Sayed said the conference will be in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa in late January or early February. He said the aim is to "work out a long-term plan for resolving problems of refugees and displacement in the region."

Sudan and Ethiopia agreed to organise the conference at meetings of government ministers held in Khartoum.

There are about two million refugees in the Horn of Africa. Civil war and famine have displaced some in their own countries or to flee to neighbouring states. Most are Ethiopian,

Somali or Sudanese. Sudan has been hosting about 850,000 Ethiopians for years.

Last spring, the overthrow of Mengistu Haile Mariam's government in Addis Ababa sent another 300,000-60,000, mostly Ethiopian army soldiers, flooding into eastern Sudan. Most of the former soldiers have been voluntarily repatriated to Ethiopia by the office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees.

Tamrat Layne, Ethiopia's prime minister, appeared on Sudanese state television Sunday night to urge all Ethiopians in Sudan to return home, "for participation in national reconstruction."

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 77111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00 Bouli
18:05 Clementine
18:30 Science Centre
19:00 News in French
19:15 French varieties
19:25 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Who's the Boss
21:10 Our House
22:00 News in English
22:30 French film

PRAYER TIMES

04:54 Fajr
06:16 Sunrise/Duha
11:28 Dhuhr
14:12 Asr
16:36 Maghrib
17:58 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweithah, Tel. 910740
Assembly of God Church, Tel. 626785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 645990

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 674400

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrence Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623441

Anglican Church Tel. 623383, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Assiout International Church Tel. 653326
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811255

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Tel. 623824, 654932
Church of the Nazarene Tel. 675691

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

It will be rainy and windy with southeasterly fresh. In Aqaba, winds will be southerly fresh and seas rough. Min./Max. temp. 3/10 Aqaba 8/20 Deserts 1/14

Jordan Valley 8/18

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 12, Aqaba 22. Humidity readings: Amman 63 per cent, Aqaba 37 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Khalid Mu'addi 743500
Dr. Khalil Abdo 795392
Dr. Abbas Al Hakim 891256
Dr. Ghaleb Zaidieh 736123
Fire pharmacy 661912
Ferdous pharmacy 778536
Al Asema pharmacy 637055
Nasrallah pharmacy 636702
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shimouni pharmacy 637660
EBRID:
Dr. Radwan Al Saad (—)

Al Shamsa pharmacy (275825)

ZARQA:
Dr. Akram Haddad (—)
Khalifah pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 661111
Rescue 630941
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 990300
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Police Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power 636381
RJ Flight Information 06-53200
Queen Alia Int. Airport. 06-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn. 644281/6
Al-Bach Maternity, J. Amn. 642412
Jabal Amman Maternity 642462
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 664171/4
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 645845
Al-Musader Hospital 667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali 666127/57
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 77101/3

Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 775111/26

Army, Marka 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674153

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560
Im Sina Hospital (09)98732
Al-Hizma Modern Hospital (09)999990
IBRID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)75555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)72225
The Al-Nefes Hospital (02)47100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) Information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (06)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

05:00 Singapore, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
09:30 Aqaba (RJ)
09:35 Muscat, Dubai (RJ)
09:40 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
17:05 New York, Montreal (RJ)
17:55 Frankfurt, Belgrade (RJ)
19:20 Tripoli (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

19:35 Beirut (ME)
11:05 Bucharest (MS)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

07:00 Aqaba (RJ)
10:30 London (RJ)
10:40 Tripoli (RJ)
11:00 Vienna, Frankfurt (RJ)
11:10 Belgrade, Madrid (RJ)
11:30 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
11:45 Rome, Madrid (RJ)
11:50 Geneva, Paris (RJ)
20:00 Jeddah (RJ)
20:15 Dhahran (RJ)
20:35 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
21:15 Damascus (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

18:30 Paris (AP)
09:15 Bucharest (RO)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in Jds per kg

Apple 550/600
Banana 500/450
Banana (Medanur) 550/500
Beans 450/400
Cabbage 150/100
Carrots 220/160
Cauliflower 180/120
Cucumbers (large) 250/150
Cucumbers (small) 520/450
Eggplant 200/140
Garlic 750/500
Grapefruit 180/120
Grapes 500/400
Lemon 500/400
Lemon 180/120
Marrow (large) 300/250
Marrow (small) 300/250
Olives 800/700
Onion (dry) 170/120
Onion (wet) 340/280
Pepper (hot) 400/350
Pepper (sweet) 350/300
Potato 320/260
Sage 600/500
Spinach 150/100
Tomatoes 400/350

BAMBOO HOUSE/WADI SAQRA/OPPOSITE PETRA BANK

Appeal by princess results in \$1 million in donations

AMMAN (J.T.) — An appeal for aid by Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath has raised about \$1 million since September 1990 in donations and contributions of goods, according to a statement Monday.

Princess Sarvath recently received a consignment of 232 kilos of medicines from the International Relations Association of Japan, according to the statement from the Office of the Crown Prince. The princess has also received 120 cartons of milk powder from private donors in the United States which will be used by children who are unable to digest regular milk.

In addition, the princess personal appeal has resulted in the donation of 2,000 blankets from Pakistan and 12 wheelchairs from Canada, according to the statement.

The items will be distributed throughout the Kingdom to needy families. Other medicines and food previously received have already been distributed, the statement said.

The donations are being distributed through the Ministry of Health, the University Hospital, the Armed Forces Medical Service, the Red Crescent Society and the Queen Alia Fund.

Plans for reorganisation of downtown finalised

AMMAN (J.T.) — Amman municipality has finalised plans and designs for the first stage of a project for the reorganisation of the heart of the capital aimed at reducing traffic congestion in the centre of the city and saving fuel estimated at JD2 million worth annually.

Engineer Hussein Madani, the project director, said that the plans laid down by teams of engineers entail making changes in the traffic directions in a number of streets, installing several traffic lights along hundreds of metres of streets together with related changes.

The changes include a 2,000-metre long rail along the pavements to prevent pedestrians from crossing the streets, which impedes the traffic movement, and increase the number of street lamps in certain areas, Mr. Madani said.

The King Hussein, Prince Mohammad, Al Hashimi, Talal, Basman, Petra, King Ghazi, Shabsough and Saadeh streets will be affected by the changes, he said.

Mr. Madani said that at least 1,500 square metres of pavements will have to be built in the course of the plan and streets will be widened in some areas.

We added that the plan was necessitated by the fact that at least 125,000 people move about in the heart of the city during day time and over 100,000 cars move in or out of the city centre on a daily basis.

According to Mr. Madani, at least JD2 million worth of fuel will be saved, which will be achieved once the plan has been implemented since it entails measures for shortening distances.

Mr. Madani said that the focus of the plan's attention was the centre of the city of Amman, which contains the main shopping centres and banks, attracting the largest number of people and vehicles, creating congestions.

Mr. Madani said once the funds for the project have been secured, work will begin. But, he added certain parts of the plan like the iron rail along the main streets have already been carried out.



Scenes like this may be a sign of the past once plans for the reorganisation of downtown Amman are implemented (File photo)

Jordan honours officers on Arab Police Day

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan Monday observed Arab Police Day with a ceremony during which police officers, retired policemen and citizens helping in police work were honoured.

Public Security Department (PSD) Director Fadel Ali attended the ceremony and made a brief statement tribute to the efforts of the police officers of various ranks in helping to ensure the public's security.

Speeches on the occasion were delivered by senior police officers who outlined police work and police activities.

A representative of the retired police officers and Dr. Zuhair Mahas, president of the Jordanian Society for the Prevention of Road Accidents, also made speeches on the occasion.

The PSD director presented awards to retired police officers, acting officers and citizens who contributed towards the discovery of crimes or prevented others.

Al Ramtha soccer club returns from Iran, greeted by officials

AMMAN (J.T.) — Al Ramtha soccer club returned to Amman from Iran Monday morning after playing a match with the Iranian Molvan club that ended in a 1-1 draw.

The draw came in the first leg of the quarterfinals in the Asian Clubs Championships.

Present at the airport to welcome the returning team were Eid Al Fayed, Ministry of Youth's Secretary General, his assistant, the secretary general of the Jordanian Olympic Committee and a crowd of the Al Ramtha sports enthusiasts. Ramtha club members, the Al Ramtha folk troupe and team supporters, who accorded the players a tumultuous cheer, were also present.

Meanwhile, the Al Ramtha club is contesting the composition of the Iranian Molvan team, which played the match last Friday. The club claims that the Molvan team included two players who had already joined other clubs, but played against Al Ramtha.

The two are Cyrus Vaigran, the captain, and Mohammad Zada. Al Ramtha club sources said that a protest over this violation of the soccer rules had been lodged with the Asian Soccer Federation, organisers of the championship.

Should the Iranian club be found to have violated the rules, the result would be changed dramatically into 3-0, club sources said.

As the Al Ramtha team awaits a reply to the protest, its members are reported undergoing rigorous training for the second leg of the quarterfinals, which is scheduled for Friday at Al Hassan Sports City in Irbid.

According to the rules of the soccer game if the Al Ramtha team wins or draws, it would move on into the semifinals.



University of Jordan Vice President for Medical Facilities Affairs Dr. Mislak Al Tarawneh addresses participants of a symposium on nursing Monday at the university (Petra photo)

Committee established to upgrade nursing training and services

AMMAN (Petra) — Questions related to promoting the nursing profession in Jordan were discussed in detail at a symposium organised by the Nursing Faculty at the University of Jordan Monday.

Nursing both in terms of teaching and practice, creating a higher nursing council to deal with issues in the field and other related matters were the main topics of discussion at the meeting, which was opened by University Vice President for Medical Facilities Affairs Dr. Mislak Al Tarawneh.

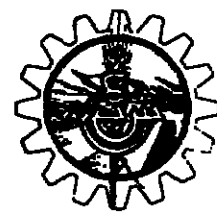
Other topics reviewed by the participants included the creation of a special department at the Health Ministry to deal with nursing affairs and to offer incentives to professional nurses, organising a post graduate studies course, offering the opportunity to community college graduates to pursue their higher studies at university level and measures to offer nurses protection against the negative effects of handling chemical and radio active substances. Nurses work at hospitals, on-the-job training courses, circumstances surrounding the male and female nurses at work in Jordan were also among topics discussed by delegates from the University of Jordan along with representatives from the Jordan University of Science and Technology and the Royal Medical Services of the Jordanian Armed Forces.

The participants issued a statement announcing the creation of a committee to work towards fulfilling the aspirations of nurses and to work out a plan that would meet their needs and satisfy their demands.

The committee comprises representatives from the ministries of health and education as well as the Jordan Nurses Association, the Royal Medical Services, the private sector and Jordanian universities.

Upon opening the meeting, Dr. Tarawneh underlined the importance of the teaching and practicing sides of the nursing profession, noting that nursing is a support for the medical practice. Dr. Tarawneh reviewed the University of Jordan's drive to raise the standard of nursing training at its faculty.

Dr. Rafiqah Abdul Rahim, the faculty dean, addressed the meeting and noted the numerous difficulties facing the country's nursing profession in general. She called for further attention to be given to the nursing profession and training to raise the standard of this profession in the Kingdom.



HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN POTASH PRODUCTION EXPANSION I.F.B. NO. 30-4857-65/5-65-7

ADVERTISEMENT FOR THE SUPPLY & INSTALLATION OF 11KV SWITCHBOARD & 3.3 KV MOTOR CONTROL CENTRES

The Arab Potash Company Limited (APC) of Amman, Jordan, plans to expand production capacity by 400,000 tonnes per year. The facilities will be located on a site adjoining the existing refinery near Safi, on the southern end of the Dead Sea, about 200 km north of the port of Aqaba.

APC has applied for financing to the World Bank. The proceeds of the loan will be applied to payments for the supply of the required equipment in accordance with the guidelines of the World Bank.

Purchases will be made from the member countries of the World Bank and Switzerland.

The Arab Potash Company invites suppliers interested in tendering for the supply of above I.F.B.'s to apply for Tender Documents to APC or Jacobs at the address shown below. The cost for this tender package shall be U.S. \$40, or equivalent, non-refundable.

1. Mr. Issa Gammoh,
Projects Manager,
The Arab Potash Co., Ltd.,
P.O.Box 1470,
Amman-Jordan

Fax No.: 962-3-377125/Site
Fax No.: 962-6-674416/Amman H.O.
Telex No.: 21683 Potash Jo.
Tel. No.: 666165/6 - Amman
665116 or 03-377121/3- Site

2. Mr. M. Hodgins,
Jacobs International Inc.,
Merrion House,
Merrion Road,
Dublin 4, - Ireland

Fax No.: 353-1-2695497
Telex No.: 30295 JCBS-EI
Tel. No.: 353-1-2695666

Submission of tenders should not be later than 12:00 noon, February 22, 1992.

A.Y. Ensour,
Managing Director,
The Arab Potash Co., Ltd.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

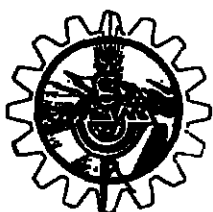
- ☆ Art exhibition by Jumana Al Hussein at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation Gallery — 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
- ☆ Exhibition of ceramics by Iraqi artist Salam Jamil Al Nouri at Alia Art Gallery.
- ☆ Art and ornamentation exhibition by Sabah Hadidi at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ☆ Art exhibition by Iraqi artist Sabeh Al Yassiri at the Royal Cultural Centre.

SEMINAR

- ☆ Seminar entitled "The Intifada and the Peace Conference: Towards Reviving the Popular Uprising in the Occupied Palestinian Land" at the Scientific and Cultural Centre of Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation — 6 p.m.



"THE KINGDOM RINGERS" AT THE MARRIOTT HOTEL — A group of 12 young students from the Baptist School featured some wonderful X-Mas carols using brassy bells. "The Kingdom Ringers" a group of 3 boys and 9 girls, directed by Barbara Johnson, play X-Mas tunes during the month of December. The Amman Marriott Hotel features the Kingdom Ringers during the currently organised X-Mas bazaars at the hotel and other X-Mas functions.



HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN POTASH PRODUCTION EXPANSION I.F.B. NO. 30-4857-64-9

ADVERTISEMENT FOR THE SUPPLY OF CONTROL SYSTEMS

The Arab Potash Company Limited (APC) of Amman, Jordan, plans to expand production capacity by 400,000 tonnes per year. The facilities will be located on a site adjoining the existing refinery near Safi, on the southern end of the Dead Sea, about 200 km north of the port of Aqaba. APC has applied for financing to the World Bank. The proceeds of the loan will be applied to payments for the supply of the required equipment in accordance with the guidelines of the World Bank.

Purchases will be made from the member countries of the World Bank and Switzerland.

The Arab Potash Company invites suppliers interested in tendering for the supply of "CONTROL SYSTEMS" to apply for Tender Documents to APC or Jacobs at the address shown below. The cost for this tender package shall be U.S. \$40, or equivalent, non-refundable.

1. Mr. Issa Gammoh,
Projects Manager,
The Arab Potash Co., Ltd.,
P.O.Box 1470,
Amman-Jordan

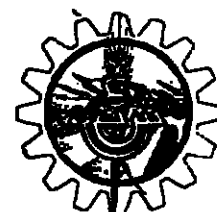
Fax No.: 962-3-377125/Site
Fax No.: 962-6-674416/Amman H.O.
Telex No.: 21683 Potash Jo.
Tel. No.: 666165/6 - Amman
665116 or 03-377121/3- Site

2. Mr. M. Hodgins,
Jacobs International Inc.,
Merrion House,
Merrion Road,
Dublin 4, - Ireland

Fax No.: 353-1-2695497
Telex No.: 30295 JCBS-EI
Tel. No.: 353-1-2695666

Submission of tenders should not be later than 12:00 noon, February 15, 1992.

A.Y. Ensour,
Managing Director,
The Arab Potash Co., Ltd.



HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN POTASH PRODUCTION EXPANSION I.F.B. NO. 30-4857-65/1/65-3

ADVERTISEMENT FOR THE SUPPLY OF POWER TRANSFORMERS

The Arab Potash Company Limited (APC) of Amman, Jordan, plans to expand production capacity by 400,000 tonnes per year. The facilities will be located on a site adjoining the existing refinery near Safi, on the southern end of the Dead Sea, about 200 km north of the port of Aqaba. APC has applied for financing to the World Bank. The proceeds of the loan will be applied to payments for the supply of the required equipment in accordance with the guidelines of the World Bank.

Purchases will be made from the member countries of the World Bank and Switzerland.

The Arab Potash Company invites suppliers interested in tendering for the supply of "POWER TRANSFORMERS" to apply for Tender Documents to APC or Jacobs at the address shown below. The cost for this tender package shall be U.S. \$40, or equivalent, non-refundable.

1. Mr. Issa Gammoh,
Projects Manager,
The Arab Potash Co., Ltd.,
P.O.Box 1470,
Amman-Jordan

Fax No.: 962-3-377125/Site
Fax No.: 962-6-674416/Amman H.O.
Telex No.: 21683 Potash Jo.
Tel. No.: 666165/6 - Amman
665116 or 03-377121/3- Site

2. Mr. M. Hodgins,
Jacobs International Inc.,
Merrion House,
Merrion Road,
Dublin 4, - Ireland

Fax No.: 353-1-2695497
Telex No.: 30295 JCBS-EI
Tel. No.: 353-1-2695666

Submission of tenders should not be later than 12:00 noon, February 29, 1992.

A.Y. Ensour,
Managing Director,
The Arab Potash Co., Ltd.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation
Established 1975

الصحف اليومية العربية السياسية مستقلة تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية

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Editorial and advertising offices:

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Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

Facsimile: 661242

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.

Subscription and advertising rates are available from the Jordan Times advertising department.

Timely but flawed

THE TIMING of the repeal of the 1953 law banning communism in Jordan and allowing for the prosecution of communist activists could not be more perfect. On the very day that the controversial legislation was rescinded, the death knell was also sounded for the Soviet Union, the prime bastion and birth place of communism. Thus, the removal of the law against communism coincided with the ending of any meaningful threat or challenge from the communist order and ideology. Nevertheless Jordan's choice to delete from its law books an archaic and possibly unconstitutional law was also a memorable occasion that deserves commemoration not so much for what it did but rather for what it suggests and implies, namely, that the democratisation process in the Kingdom is making great strides in form and substance.

The other bill passed Sunday by the Lower House of Parliament was the new Defence Law. The old 1935 Defence Law that the new law replaces was adopted before the establishment of the Kingdom. By all accounts and standards, the old Defence Law should have been repealed a long time ago. Yet there is something important lacking in the new legislation in the sense that it does not meet the requirements prescribed by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which Jordan ratified in 1977. Article 4 of that international instrument calls on member states to notify the U.N. secretary general of any declaration of martial law or state of emergency in order for him to notify the rest of the state parties to the covenant of the country's decision. The covenant also calls on countries to notify the U.N. about the articles of the covenant that it wishes to derogate from for the purposes of maintaining law and order in an emergency situation. The new Defence Law of 1990 does not contain any such references and, therefore, it is in this context deficient in a serious manner. It would be relatively easy to rectify such serious omission by enacting an immediate amendment to the law for this purpose. Otherwise, the Kingdom would remain accountable before the relevant U.N. body for such important flaw.

It appears also that our legal experts are not sufficiently cognizant of the country's treaty obligations. National legislations are often adopted without due attention to the various conventions that the government has signed and ratified. As such international commitments supersede national laws, with the exception of the Constitution, it would be prudent to keep in focus such treaty obligations when the country articulates its legislation.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily Monday attacked as shameful the behaviour and practices of the leaders of the Arab Gulf states and described a summit they are holding as paving the ground for yet another shameful act against the Arab countries. The Gulf leaders, meeting in a tent which cost \$9 million to erect, have chosen to isolate themselves from the rest of the Arab Nation and to sell themselves to the colonialist Western nations, said the paper. Despite all attempts on the part of Saudi Arabia to lessen the degree of hostility and hatred harboured by the Gulf states, expect for Oman, towards the other Arab countries, these states continue to act with hostility towards the Arab World, the paper said. It said that the leaders of these states are propagating the idea among their peoples that Arabism is a racist movement after they had given their blessings to a U.N. General Assembly decision to cancel a 1975 resolution that equated Zionism with racism. These leaders, said the paper, are presenting themselves as victims in the Gulf war against Iraq, whose people were victim of an American-led aggression, and boasting to be the sole beneficiaries of the aggression on a sister Arab state which continues to suffer from starvation, sickness and deprivation. With their summit in Kuwait and their current behaviour, the Gulf states' leaders are trying to escape from their shameful act of offering Arab wealth as a gift to the aggressors. The paper said that the consequence of this summit in Kuwait can by no means brighten the image of those who have sold out their nation.

A columnist in Al Ra'i daily urged the Kuwaiti authorities and Kuwaiti people to refrain from further mal-practices against the Jordanian-Palestinian community still living in the emirate. Referring to the current campaign to evict the remainder of this community from the emirate, Bader Abdul Haq, said that the Jordanian and Palestinian citizens should be offered thanks for their long and noble service to the emirate and not a hostile action from people they have lived with for decades. Writing in Al Ra'i daily, the writer said that more than a year has elapsed after the Gulf war, but the Kuwaitis are singling out the Palestinians and the Jordanians out of all the other nationalities in Kuwait, to vent for their hatred and mistreat these unfortunate people who happened to be caught up against their will in a very dangerous situation that witnessed the occupation of Kuwait and the subsequent Western aggression on Iraq, the writer pointed out. He said that the Kuwaitis are finding in the Gulf summit meeting a pretext to drive out whatever remained of the Jordanians and Palestinians who committed no crime and who had never tried over the past decades to cause trouble or destabilise the security of the emirate as they are being accused at present. The writer said the Kuwaitis should offer the Jordanians and Palestinians their rights and compensations with a word of thanks rather than treating them in a shameful manner.

The View from Fourth Circle

Ghosts, failure and the gates of hell

By Rami G. Khouri

ABOUT two months ago, I wrote that we should not expect anything substantial to occur during the first several months of the peace process that was launched in Madrid at the end of October. Here we are at the end of December, and nothing very substantial has happened yet. I would simply add today that the peace talks probably will not make progress on substantive issues for at least another two months, perhaps by late February, for very good reasons related to the complex concept of human honour.

The fact is, all the key players in the peace process except for Moscow are participating with much reluctance, because they will have to relinquish or admit things that they would rather neither relinquish nor admit. Moscow's case is relatively simple because it is the first instance in modern history of a ghost sponsoring an international diplomatic process — a nice, friendly, lovable ghost, but a ghost nevertheless. The ghost can only win by being invited to the party, and win big by being asked to co-host the jamboree.

The Israelis have to relinquish one thing (lands they occupied in 1967), and admit two things (that the Palestinians exist and have national rights, and that the idea that God gave the land of Palestine to form a Greater Israel is emotionally compelling to Jews but politically fantastic to the rest of the world). All the Arabs have to admit one thing (Israel exists and must be recognised and accepted as a legal state in this region), and give up one thing (the expectation that the justice of our position is sufficient to bring us back our rights and lands, without our having to engage in a painful diplomatic process to retrieve them).

The Americans will have to relinquish much extra money for Israel, but that's nothing new, and will have to admit one thing (that their imbalanced support for Israel for many decades has been a key factor in perpetuating the Arab-Israeli conflict, and has to be modified into a more even-handed policy).

In other words, everybody will have to admit they were once mistaken, and will now have to compromise to atone for the wrongs of the past. This is never an easy thing to do, but is essential if peace and justice are to prevail. The point about the stalemate since Oct. 30 is that, a) nobody wants to make the first move to admitting their own past errors by b) making a gesture of compromise to the enemy, because c) this will force them to swallow their pride and accept the contentions of the enemy. This tactic of maintaining rigid, hardline positions is totally normal at this stage of the process, and we should not let it bother us. With such obstinate protagonists, the stalemate can only be broken if one side collapses (unlikely), or the third party mediator/sponsor steps in and forces the issue (likely, but not certain).

I would suspect that at the next round of talks, the sponsors (Baker, Ghost & Co.) will go through the motions of playing the mediator's role, but will still evade the gut issues of land, withdrawal, and recognition, i.e. they will not want to get into the admitting or relinquishing business, and will not prod their party guests to do anything of the sort — yet. The United States is now paying the price for its many decades of partiality and heavy-handedness in the Middle East — and Mr. Baker's Catalyst Fantastic Show ("golly gee whizz folks, we're just a bunch of friendly old cow pokes here to lend a helping hand if y'all need a little friendly nudge, y'all understand what I mean?") simply will not eliminate the impact of several decades of official American

bias and shortsightedness.

The minute the United States gets off the fence and leans on Israel to accept the principle of exchanging land for peace (as it has started to do with the \$10 billion loan guarantee delay), the Israelis harden up (as they did in Madrid and Washington). If the United States pushes harder, the Israelis will try to fight back through their powerful American electoral interests. In an election year when Mr. Bush is having serious short-term problems, the price of confronting Israel may be too high for him in domestic electoral terms. The result is either a total breakdown of the peace process, or a false peace rammed down the throat of a weak Arab World, and destined to collapse, Vietnam peace-like, within months or years. In either case, the outcome is not hopeful.

This brings up the big question that has always loomed large in my book: what happens if the peace talks fail, if the sponsors do not intervene, if the protagonists remain deadlocked, and if the whole process collapses in late 1992?

This is still a strong possibility. It raises a vision of the future that all of us in the Holy Land would like to avoid. But we cannot avoid it, because, like the waste and the suffering of the past, it stalks us and haunts us. It is a vision of perpetual conflict, ever more violent warfare, and an increasingly unstable and fractured region deep in the grips of fear, hatred, anger, fanaticism, desperation, and death.

We should be clear about the stakes at hand in the peace talks. If Baker, Ghost & Co. throw up their hands in despair, the process fails, and the Arabs and Israelis return home for good, our region is certain to continue down the road it has travelled since the 1950s. The Arab Nation will continue to struggle for its identity and its soul. The Arab people will perpetually battle the iron grips of autocratic regimes and oligarchic interests that seek to maintain a false stability by entering into mercantile alliances with imperial powers in the West. Some particularly grotesque Arab regimes will seek protection by renting armies from the West, while the more sensible Arab people at grassroots level will seek dignity by drawing strength from their own culture and humanity.

The affront that Israel represents to the Arab and Muslim people will continue to wound the conscience of those in the realms of Arabism and Islam who have grown weary of the struggle, and who have settled instead for the solace of air conditioners, the joys of potato chips, and the comforts of just enough cash at the end of every month to feed the family. The process of Arab defeat and subjugation will not dissipate into the warm evenings of the Orient or disappear into the mysterious recesses of the Oriental mind. Instead, it will whittle away at the remaining fragments of Arab self-respect, constantly chiding every new generation to dare anew to seek dignity and national self-assertion, to assure itself enough food to feed its entire nation.

A Middle East that continues the trends of the past few decades will surely explode again into anger and warfare. Like the burning of Kuwait in 1991, this will see other Arab countries set ablaze — perhaps by their own people, perhaps by angry neighbours from the same house of Arabism, or perhaps by hungry, unemployed,

frantic members of the same Islamic-Christian family who have neither enough food for their children nor water for their bodies. They will be offered air conditioners and potato chips, and they will burn them both, for such commodities mean little to dying societies oscillating between desperation and death.

We are in the uncomfortable situation of negotiating with little power other than the morality and justice of our case (a currency that means little to ghosts and those who associate with them) or the threat that our people will erupt into a great frenzy of despair at some point in the future, when they run out of patience, lies, tricks, food, and water.

The cost of failure is almost unimaginable, but still possible. It is a cost that will be deemed acceptable by the West, because the Arabs have little strategic value left in a world in which cowboys battle ghosts. It may also be acceptable to Israel, which feels, Crusader-like, that it can isolate itself from its neighbours, protected by castles, nuclear bombs, and foreign sources of income. Some Arabs and Muslims, for their part, may decide that they, too, can distance themselves from the madness of their Semitic cousins, perhaps by living permanently in five-star hotels in chic international resorts.

In fact, though, these visions of escape are just that — mere, hollow visions — because it will not be easy to escape the fury of several hundred million Arabs who are relegated to chronic poverty, autocracy, humiliation, and rage. This, in the end, is the vision that haunts us: a future as flawed as our recent past, a world ruled by political injustice and material inequity, the birthplace of the three great monotheistic religions rendered into a grotesque battlefield of messianic armies, a veritable killing field where the sword is held by those who kill in the name of their own God.

We have already had a glimpse of this ugly future, in the violence of the Israeli right, or the butchery conducted in several Arab countries by public and private armies that claim allegiance to assorted Christian or Muslim groups. Our land has been soiled by hijackers, terrorists, and hostage-takers. Our heritage has been demeaned by the highest rate of military spending in the entire world juxtaposed against the lowest rate of genuine stability in the entire world. Our future has been placed in bondage to a great unknown: can we escape from the current cycle of defeat, stalemate, and violence?

The current political-economic order in the region will not long sustain itself if existing problems are not resolved to the satisfaction of the majority of the people of this region. The Arab-Israeli conflict is a key determinant of the current state of fragmentation, violence, and regression, and will remain so if it is not resolved in a just manner. Either we move forward to justice, peace, coexistence, and stability for all, or we move forward to more of the violence of the past — a past that destroyed Crusaders and many other foreign imperial intruders, and that mercilessly burned those of the region, whether Christians, Muslims or Jews, who feigned legitimacy by seeking to live in small fortress states isolated from their natural surroundings.

This is what is at stake in the peace talks. We should always be aware of it, because it is a reality that we may have to deal with one day. As we negotiate in good faith, we should aim for the best, but always be prepared for the worst. The option of failure is not a weekend in Aqaba. It is a rendezvous with the gates of hell.

Silwan settlers — part of long tradition of takeovers in Jerusalem

By Robert Mahoney
Reuter

JERUSALEM — Across the roofs of the covered markets in Jerusalem's Muslim quarter, militant Israeli settlers are spreading out from the Jewish quarter — latest encroachment in what Palestinians call the creeping "Judaisation" of Arab East Jerusalem.

The skyline that embraces the Christian church of the Holy Sepulchre on Golgotha Hill and the great Muslim shrine, the golden dome of the Rock Mosque, is now dotted with Israeli flag.

They mark houses taken over by settlers with the blessing and protection of the most hardline government in modern Israeli history.

Palestinians say groups of nationalist and messianic Jews, using a combination of financial inducement, harassment, and legal manoeuvres, have taken over at least 53 Arab houses and a large Christian hospice in East Jerusalem, which Israel captured from Jordan in 1967.

The settlers have now set their sights on the Arab village of Silwan outside the city walls, they add.

Maps showing buildings taken over by the authorities for security purposes or houses liable for seizure by the state under laws

governing absentee ownership are officially secret. But the settlers are familiar with their contents and are basing plans on them.

Israeli flags flying in Jerusalem's old city show a chain of Jewish settlement stretching along major thoroughfares to the western wall, Judaism's holiest site.

The pattern of Jewish settlement in the old city fits into a bigger scheme within the municipality of Jerusalem, which in turn slots into a wider West Bank picture.

Maps obtained by reporters show plans to build more than 200 housing units for Jews around the old city walls, more than 200 homes south of the walls in Silwan and more than 1,000 units north of the old city, all in Arab areas.

Jerusalem's Mayor Teddy Kollek has denounced the plans as provocative. During his 26 years in city hall Mr. Kollek was pursued a "mosaic" policy of keeping Jews out of potentially explosive Arab neighbourhoods. But he has surrounded such areas with huge Jewish housing projects.

Some 140,000 Jews now live across the pre-1967 border of the city, slowly encircling the estimated 150,000 Arabs in East Jerusalem and cutting them off

from their natural hinterland of the West Bank. About 350,000 Israelis live in West Jerusalem. Israel claims the entire city of Jerusalem as its capital, but this is not recognised internationally.

Even if he wanted to, Mr. Kollek would be virtually powerless to stop the drive by hawkish Housing Minister Ariel Sharon to place enough Jews in the West Bank and Jerusalem to make its return to Arabs under any U.S.-brokered Middle East peace accord extremely difficult.

Chains of budding settlements cut the Jerusalem region into quarters, from Ramallah in the north of Bethlehem in the south, from the Latrun region in the west to the hills overlooking Jericho in the east.

Mr. Sharon heads a special government committee, formed to absorb an influx of Soviet Jews, which can and does override the Jerusalem municipality. Palestinians and left-wing Israeli politicians say the trail of permission and funding for many recent settler takeovers can be traced back to Mr. Sharon, whose office routinely declines to discuss such matters.

So when the U.S. State Department issued a strong appeal to the government this month to rein in settlers in Silwan, Palestinians laughed.

One unearthed a speech by

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir in August 1988 which left no doubt about government plans.

"We must see to it that Jews settle in the old city and that this becomes part of our general settlement policy in the land of Israel and also that East Jerusalem be settled extensively by Jews," Mr. Shamir said.

Palestinian academics say government policy appears to be to maintain a Jew to Arab ratio of 7:1 in the Jerusalem area. Because the Arab birth rate is higher this can be achieved only by preventing Arabs from building in Jerusalem and moving them from the Muslim quarter, they say.

The Palestinians say the first goal is easily achieved by withholding municipal planning permission. The second requires at least a veneer of legality.

Palestinians say the law favours the settlers who use evidence of former Jewish ownership or tenancy of an Arab-occupied house to acquire it. Palestinians are forbidden by law to buy former Arab houses in the Jewish quarter of the old city and it is almost impossible for them to buy property in West Jerusalem as Jews won't sell to them.

The main settler groups use the law or pay huge sums to tenants to acquire properties, sometimes one room at a time.

Ministers have acknowledged channeling funds to one group which also raises money from the United States. Potential foreign investors are given a tour of the old city pointing out former Jewish houses.

Ateret Cohanim, an offshoot of the larger Gush Emunim (block of the faithful) group colonising the West Bank and Gaza Strip, already refers to the Muslim quarter as the old Jewish quarter.

"Everything we do is legal," said Yossi Baumol, of Ateret Cohanim. "What we are trying to do here is right an historical wrong. There was a Jewish majority here in 1914 under Turkish rule."

Jews left the old city in the 1920s, because overcrowding and repeated Arab rioting.

Settlers now say they are merely repossessing Jewish-owned property in the Muslim quarter. Palestinians and foreign academics dispute this.

British researcher Graham McNeill says Jewish occupancy, like that of their Arab neighbours, was generally based not on ownership but on the traditional system whereby the tenant of property buys the right of occupancy through paying key-money.

The settlers take advantage of the lack of land registration in the old city where residency had traditionally been the main proof of ownership.

Many properties have also been seized by the authorities for security reasons since 1967. Their number and location is a secret. Several rooms acquired this way were given to settlers this year after a Jew was stabbed nearby.

Even in contested cases the settlers just move in to "create facts on the ground." "If the Arab tenants go to court, the case could take years, during which time settlers are often allowed to stay in the disputed property."

This is so with the most famous case, the Greek Orthodox owned Saint John's Hospice in the old city. The Greek patriarch challenged the Ateret Cohanim 1990 takeover of the 72-room complex and won an eviction order which the settlers challenged. While the case continues some 20 settlers have been allowed to stay in the hospice.

The settlers who took a house in Silwan in December bought a part of it from a tenant. Even though the owner did not sell it to them, the sale was viewed as legal, and the settlers moved in. British academic Richard Thomas believes many Arabs will have left the Muslim quarter within 10 years.

"If the Israeli occupation of the old city continues without major changes, by the end of the century, we are likely to see an old city 'Disneyworld' with the former Palestinian residents providing an exotic biblical backdrop for tourist excursions," he said.

LETTERS

Iraqis need help

To the Editor:

HIS grace the Archbishop of Canterbury will be visiting Jordan in the first few days of next month. This is, of course, a good opportunity for everyone to welcome him here, not far away from the Christian holy places which Israel usurped.

It would be an excellent idea if His Grace could spend a few more days in the Middle East to be able to visit Iraq to witness the inhumane conditions in which it was left and from which it still suffers with the death of tens of thousands of children, women and old people who are deprived of food and medicine. I am sure His Grace would call through his exalted position for the unprecedented sanctions to be lifted.

George Khouri,
Amman, Jordan.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address, as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

The writer is a landowner and an economist.

A day in the life of a Palestinian town

By Nidal M. Ibrahim
Special to the Jordan Times

BETHLEHEM: Occupied West Bank — The small crowd stood outside the metre-high wiremesh fence surrounding the Israeli police station. Inside the gates, sitting in the back of a jeep, the three girls, with an edge of hysteria in their voices, pleaded their innocence with the soldiers.

"We were going to the store to buy yoghurt," they screamed.

The girls, aged between 15 and 18, had just been taken into custody. They were suspected of having put up political posters.

Though not related to any of the girls, the crowd outside, exemplifying the sense of family and cooperation that has come to characterise the Palestinian intifada, pleaded with the soldiers to allow the girls to go free.

The girls were soon taken from the back of the jeep into the police station. Word of their arrest was passed to their families. Parents, uncles, aunts, brothers and sisters soon joined the vigil in the chilly, empty night.

An hour passed before another army jeep screamed to a halt in front of the gates. In the back, one could hear giggling. Two women soldiers, looking out of place in their olive drab uniforms, were helped off the jeep and led into the police station. They had been brought in to strip search the detainees.

By this time, the parents were growing increasingly despondent. As the mothers continually uttered prayers, the fathers helplessly paced back and forth, stopping occasionally to look and listen to the soldiers' screaming and the girls' pleading.

Suddenly, two unshaven and

unkempt teenagers walked out from the honeycomb of alleyways that split into the city square. They walked past the waiting crowd, to the edge of the wiremesh fence and stood there, away from the crowd. Soon, a soldier came out to meet them. After some initial whispering, the soldier started screaming at the teenagers as if they had committed some offence and pushed them into the police yard and the building.

"This is it," said a bystander. "Those dogs! Now we know (who turned the girls in)." The two teenagers, he was saying, were most probably collaborators. Not being residents of Bethlehem, they had recently been seen around town.

"I am not afraid of the Jews," the bystander, a local reporter, said. "What can the Jews do to me? I am afraid of the Arabs. That is our problem."

Lucy, one of the girls

arrested, had been arrested and imprisoned previously for taking part in the intifada, said Hanna J. Nasser, deputy mayor of Bethlehem, interviewed the next day. Her two older brothers had also served time in prison. Lucy's father had died when she was young, he said.

"Her mother came to the house in the morning to see me and asked me to intervene with the authorities," Mr. Nasser said. "I told her there was nothing I could do."

Each of the girls eventually confessed to being guilty of the charges, he said. There were reports that they were slapped and beaten during the interrogation.

Each girl was fined 750 shekels, Mr. Nasser said. The average monthly salary of a municipal worker in Bethlehem is 700 shekels per month. While people alleged offences and fines may vary,

similar scenes are repeated hundreds of times throughout the occupied Arab territories, one witness said.

Economic strangulation — either through imposition of

finer or the suppression of the emergence of an economic infrastructure — is the main weapon used by the Israelis to silence the nationalistic tendencies of the Palestinians.

The story of Lucy and her friends, and most of all the 750 shekels fine, was soon known by most of the town, spread through the grapevine. Economic strangulation — the mes-

sage had been reinforced. "We hope that we reach our goal eventually and have our lands liberated," Mr. Nasser said. "We can't continue to live under occupation."

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Freij rejects

(Continued from page 1)
his community and Beit Sahur, a Christian town where tradition holds shepherds learned of the birth of Christ, would accept only directives from the uprising leaders and Hamas.

He added: "I want to say that the Palestinian leadership outside inside support the opening of Bethlehem and adjoining Beit Sahur... all the day."

He urged shops, restaurants and cafes to remain open and said people should "do their shopping."

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Hamas have been the main forces behind the four-year uprising.

The uprising has resulted in subdued Christmas holidays in Bethlehem in recent years, with shops and restaurants closed.

Beirut body

(Continued from page 1)
held, and Mr. Pico is trying to obtain their release along with the remains of hostages who died in captivity.

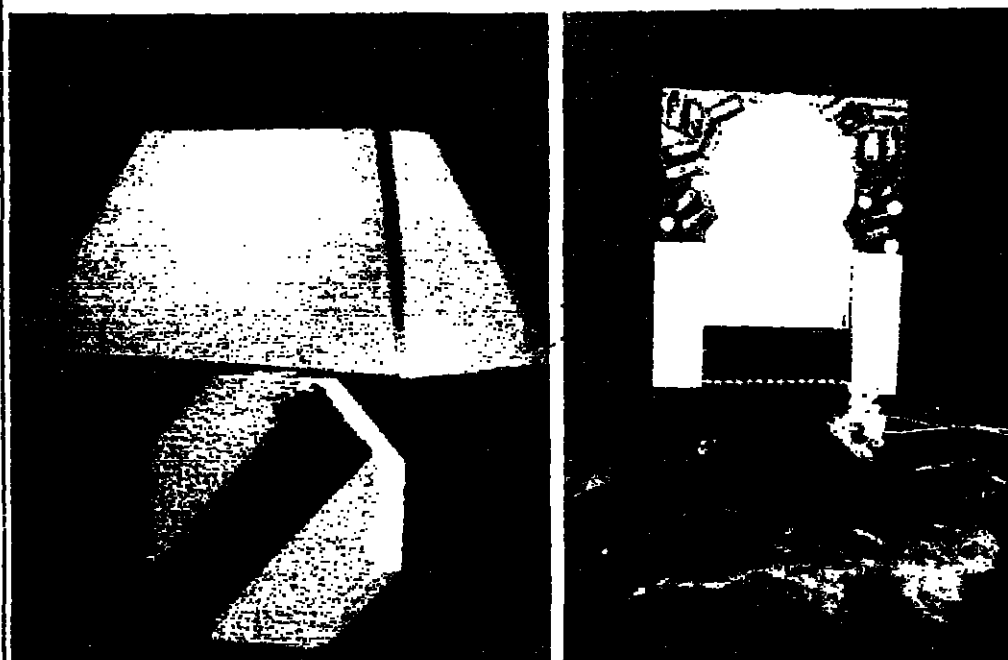
Col. Higgins was the last American to be kidnapped in Lebanon since the spate of abductions began in 1984. He also was the third American hostage to die.

Announcing his execution, his kidnappers released a 30-second videotape showing a man, purportedly Col. Higgins, hanging from a gallows. There was no way to determine when the video was made.

U.N. sources in Lebanon have said that although his death was announced in July 1989, they believed Col. Higgins died of torture in December 1988, after an escape attempt.

In addition to Col. Higgins, William Buckley, 57, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) station chief in Beirut and librarian Peter Kilburn, 61, have died in captivity.

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Real Madrid drops point, raise rivals' hopes

LONDON (R) — Real Madrid's colourless goalless draw against Real Oviedo has raised rivals' hopes that the Spanish Soccer Championship is not yet a foregone conclusion.

"The league is hotting up," ran the headline of a popular Spanish sporting paper as Atletico Madrid moved one point closer to the top of the table this weekend after their 1-0 win over Sporting Gijon. They now trail Real by six points.

Atletico trainer Luis Aragones believes the league is still wide open. "Madrid's advantage is important but you can't now talk about a league winner — that won't be decided until the end and then we'll see who the champions are."

"You can't win all the time," said Real Madrid striker Emilio Butragueno, who missed plenty of chances in his side's second consecutive draw after their irresistible run of form.

Real trainer Radomir Antic preferred to focus on progress so far. "This has been the best year of my sporting career," he said.

Barcelona, also back on track, slammed Cadiz 4-1 and heard Danish striker Michael Laudrup confirm he was staying for another season.

"I haven't found anything better than this club," he said.

Ace French marksman Jean-Pierre Papin had another successful weekend. On Saturday, he helped Marseille crush Caen 5-0.

Papin is almost sure to clinch his fourth consecutive title with champions Marseille, now four points clear of Monaco with a game in hand.

It will probably be his last season in France. Like many European soccer stars, Papin is

poised to join an Italian club. The 28-year-old striker said he had received offers from AC Milan, Napoli and Juventus.

Dutch first division leaders PSV Eindhoven go into the winter break with their unbeaten record intact.

PSV trainer and former England manager Bobby Robson gave a rare smile after his side's closing game of 1991 — they won 4-0 away to FC Twente Sunday. He even had the good humour to throw a couple of words of his seldom-heard Dutch into a post-match interview.

But rumours of his departure from Eindhoven at the end of the season will continue to swirl until his PSV contract is renegotiated next month.

EUROPEAN SOCCER

Thirteen wins and six draws have given his side 32 points. Only two points and a game in hand separate them from Feyenoord Rotterdam, who have mounted a concerted charge on the top of the table during the early winter months. The league resumes on Jan. 10.

Porto's goalkeeper Vitor Baia set a Portuguese record of 1,079 minutes without conceding a goal in the 0-0 draw at Boavista Sunday.

Baia surprised the 1,064-minute mark set by Benfica's Manuel Bento 10 years ago.

Champions Benfica, who beat Uniao da Madeira 1-0 away Saturday, regained top place.

Porto remained one point behind with a game in hand.

Benfica, reduced to 10 men in the 71st minute when Soviet striker Sergei Urin was sent off for a

foul, clinched the winner four minutes later. Antonio Pacheco scored from the penalty spot after Vitor Pereira was brought down by Brazilian defender Marco Aurelio.

An 87th minute goal by defender Jose Leal gave third-placed Sporting a 2-1 home victory over Maritimo.

Leeds United blew a chance to go back on top of the English soccer first division when they were held 0-0 at Nottingham Forest Sunday.

Manchester United, who have two games in hand after their home game with Aston Villa was postponed Saturday because of a waterlogged pitch, stayed ahead of Leeds on goal difference. Both have 44 points.

Leeds enjoyed more possession but failed to produce clear-cut opening, while Forest could have stolen the points if they had put away one of three good chances.

Manchester United face Leeds in a top-of-the-table clash at Elland Road next Saturday.

England captain Gary Lineker scored his first goal since coming back from a four-match break because of his baby son's illness to help Tottenham win 2-1 at Crystal Palace.

Lineker, English football's top scorer with 20 goals, scored in the 36th minute Paul Walsh had put Tottenham ahead 20 minutes earlier.

But Spurs struggled against a fierce wind after the break and Palace pulled a goal back when Tottenham's former England defender Terry Fenwick put the ball in his own net in the 62nd minute.

Papin wins Europe's Player of the Year Award

PARIS (R) — Jean-Pierre Papin, whose fans love him as much for his unpretentious life style as his goal-scoring exploits, was voted European Footballer of the Year.

The Marseille striker won the vote by 29 sports journalists over the other three finalists, German skipper Lothar Matthaus of Internazionale, and Yugoslav stars Darko Pancev and Dejan Savicevic of European champions Red Star Belgrade.

The 28-year-old striker, who has scored 124 times in the league since his first match with Marseille in 1986, is only the third Frenchman to receive the prestigious title after Raymond Kopa and current national team boss Michel Platini.

Papin, despite his successful year, was on the losing side in the European Cup final against Red Star last May but he is hoping to make up by helping France win the European Championship in Sweden next June.

Papin won 141 votes, while Matthaus, the 1990 European Footballer of the Year, Pancev and Savicevic each got 42 points.

A third Yugoslav, Real Madrid's Robert Prosinecki, was fifth with 34.

To his opponents, Papin is one of the most dangerous strikers in the world today. But to everybody else, he is J.P.P., the star with simple tastes.

"A star can have simple tastes," runs a slogan Papin has been repeating for weeks on French television in a slick advertisement selling disposable razors.

"I will never change because I will always remember that I used to earn 4,000 francs (\$730) a month," said Papin, whose mother works at a supermarket checkout.

Thanks to their inspirational scorer, Marseille established themselves as arguably the best side in Europe by eliminating formidable AC Milan of Italy in the European Cup in March.

"It was fantastic," Papin said. "Nobody thought we could do it but we knew."

The dream ended in Bari in May with Marseille's European Cup final defeat on penalties by Red Star.

"I don't want to watch that match again," Papin said. "Our dream was spoilt, and the rest of the season with it."

But worse was still to come. Before a league match at St. Etienne last month Papin was struck by a beer bottle as he got off the players' coach. St. Etienne doctors and club President Andre Laurent later accused him of having feigned injury.

"How could I do such a thing?" Papin said. "It was just disgusting. I couldn't stand it because it was my honesty that was put in doubt. Football will never mean the same to me."

SPORTS NEWS IN BRIEF

Goalkeeper Higuita to leave Valladolid

VALLADOLID, Spain (R) — Colombia's colourful World Cup goalkeeper Rene Higuita, famous for his forays into midfield, said Sunday he was leaving Real Valladolid because he had not adjusted to Spanish soccer. "I'm going because I haven't performed as well as many people were expecting, myself included," the long-haired Higuita told reporters after Sunday's 2-2 home draw with Tenerife in the Spanish first division. Valladolid's poor season — they are two from bottom with only three wins in 15 matches — has led to speculation over the future of all four of their Colombians, including midfielders Carlos Valderrama and Leonel Alvarez and coach Pacho Maturana. All three players are going to Colombia for the Christmas holidays but Higuita, who has one of the worst records with 25 goals conceded this season, will not be coming back.

Malta holds Greece to 1-1 draw

VALLETTA (R) — Soccer Minnows Malta picked up only their second point as they held Greece 1-1 at home in their final European Championship Group 6 qualifier. The Maltese, who finished bottom of the group won by European champions, the Netherlands, were on course for a rare win when Stefan Sultana seized on an error by Greek goalkeeper Georgis Pliatsis to score in the 42nd minute. But Greece, lacking several experienced players, drew level through substitute Georgis Marinakis in the 67th minute. Greece finished third in the group.

Wilander to skip Australian open

STOCKHOLM (AP) — Former World No. 1 Mats Wilander, who had knee surgery in July, will not play in the Australian Open on Jan. 13-26 and may retire from tennis. "I haven't trained in the last couple of weeks," Wilander said in a Swedish radio interview. "I don't think I'll play again until the European clay court season starts in the spring. But I haven't made a final decision. If I play again in the spring, I'll enter a small tournament." The 28-year-old Swede, who was injured at Queen's Club before Wimbledon, completed three legs of the Grand Slam in 1988, outlasting Ivan Lendl in the U.S. Open and was briefly ranked No. 1 in the world. Wilander, who has dropped out of the top 100 on the ATP Tour computer rankings, was tied with Lendl for most Grand Slam singles title (seven) in the 1980s. He won the French Open and Australian Open three times. His last tournament victory came in Itapirica, Brazil, a year ago.

Wheaton, Fernandez withdraw from team

PERTH, Australia (AP) — Grand Slam cup winner David Wheaton and teammate Mary Joe Fernandez have withdrawn from the U.S. team competing in the Hopman Cup Team Tennis Tournament, organisers said. Wheaton and Fernandez had to drop out because of unspecified injuries, the organisers said. The pair will be replaced by Derrick Rostagno and Amy Frazier, they said. Rostagno is ranked 13th in the world and Frazier is 27th. The U.S. team remains third-seeded for the tournament, behind the German combination of Boris Becker and Steffi Graf and the Spanish brother-sister pairing of Emilio Sanchez and Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario. The Hopman Cup is a 12-nation exhibition event that features men's and women's singles and mixed doubles contests. The tournament is to be played at the Perth Superdome from Dec. 27 to Jan. 3 and is one of a number of warm-up events for the Australian Open, which begins Jan. 13 in Melbourne.

Weber 1st in Paris-Cape Town prologue

Rouen, France (R) — Germany's Erwin Weber, driving a Mitsubishi Pajero, won the four kilometres prologue to the Paris-Cape Town Rally Sunday. Finland's Ari Vatanen, favourite to win the 25-day, 12,472 kms haul, came second in the shakedown test to decide the running order for Monday's official start. Vatanen, in a Citroen ZX, clocked four minutes, one second, just one second behind Weber. After travelling south through France followed by a ferry crossing of the Mediterranean, the 340-plus competitors face their first serious action Thursday with a 651 kms desert haul from Misratah to Sirte in Libya.

Osoro heads Kenyan athletics sweep

MOL, Belgium (R) — Ondoro Osoro led a Kenyan sweep of the first four places in a Grand Prix cross-country. Osoro, overall winner of last year's inaugural series, led virtually throughout. He finished 100 metres clear of World Championship bronze medalist Simon Karori. The pair staged a one-two triumph in the opening race of the series in Boileb, France, on Dec. 1. Francesco Panetta, running his first cross-country following a suspension by his Italian Federation, headed the European challenge in sixth place. Four-times world champion John Ngugi of Kenya signalled his return to form in ninth spot. Ireland's Cathriona McKiernan also made it two in a row in the women's section after pulling away from Belgian Veronique Collard 400 metres from the line.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY DECEMBER 24, 1991

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Unwise, sudden and dramatic changes that for the most part are not beneficial put an unlikely slant on this special holiday evening as the Moon squares Venus and Pluto...

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Now you can see clearly what you need to do in order to get those duties attended to that are at present impending upon your desire for new outlets.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You have a partner with very definite views and its up to you to show you are anxious to get along better with him by showing you have a cooperative attitude.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You have many tasks to do in preparation for tomorrow and if you are enthusiastic about them you can have a great time with close friends.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Look to those whom you regard as your truly compatible pals and go along with the pleasures and entertainments that they have planned for you.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Now you find that your interest in matters beneath your own roof can be expressed and you can gain the approval of your own family by consulting with them.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You have lots of chances now to get everything of a regular nature so arranged that your days ahead will flow much more easily and happily.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You now can get a whole new inspiration to gain your aspirations and particularly if you will study those outlets that mean a great deal to you.

VERGO: (August 22 to September 22) Whatever you would like to do that means getting out of your own

THE BETTER HALF

By Harris



Bubka ready to compete for Ukraine

STOCKHOLM (AP) — Sergei Bubka has dominated world pole vaulting for the last decade while competing for the Soviet Union. Now he looks forward to representing his native Ukraine.

"Why not compete for Ukraine? I think it's the best solution," Bubka said in a telephone interview Sunday from his home town of Donetsk. "I don't understand why we must be one team of 11 countries."

Bubka was referring to the 11 former Soviet republics that formed the Commonwealth of Independent States Saturday in Alma Ata, Kazakhstan.

Ukraine earlier this week asked the International Olympic Committee to allow it to participate independently in the 1992 games, according to a news agency.

The request was made Thursday, the same day the Vice President of the Soviet Olympic Committee said Ukraine would compete on a unified Soviet team at the winter games that begin in Albertville, France, on Feb. 8.

An official request was sent from the Ukrainian parliament Thursday asking that Ukraine's National Olympic Committee be recognised as a full member of the IOC, the Ukrainian Informa-

tion Service said.

Bubka, who broke the world pole vault record four times indoors and four times outdoors this year, said he had not yet talked to the Ukrainian Olympic Committee.

"I don't have much information about an Ukrainian team. It's a difficult question. But we'll have a meeting in Kiev Tuesday. Then I'll meet our leaders. If Ukraine can't send its own team to the winter games, maybe it will happen for the summer games."

At least 15 countries, including Canada and Great Britain, had recognised Ukraine following the former Soviet republic's overwhelming vote on independence on Dec. 1. Ukrainian athletes have won 400 medals, including 177 golds, for the Soviet Union since 1952.

Bubka, who will defend his 1988 Olympic title in Barcelona in August, said the political turmoil in the former Soviet Union has created a tough situation for many athletes.

Gossport, the government agency that funded, controlled and pumped Communist ideology into generations of Soviet champion athletes, went out of business early this month.

"The economic situation is

very bad. Who will give money to the athletes? For me it's no problem, but it will be difficult for many other athletes," said Bubka, who has several endorsement contracts and gets big bonus money every time he sets a world record.

Bubka, who earlier this year signed a contract to compete for a track club in Berlin, has broken the world pole vault record 28 times — 15 indoors and 13 outdoors. That makes him one of the greatest record-breakers in track and field history.

His indoor record is 6.12 metres and he improved the outdoor mark to 6.10 (20-0) — becoming the first man to clear 20 feet outdoors — in Malmö, Sweden, a few weeks before winning the event at the World Athletics Championships in Tokyo in August.

Bubka, 28, and Carl Lewis, the outstanding athletics athletes of the 1980s, will compete Feb. 5 in Stockholm's Globe Arena.

"I will probably be my season debut indoors although I may compete in a meet in France at the end of January," Bubka said. "I'm training quite hard now. I've been jumping well in training, but I'm bothered by pain in my left leg. It's an old injury."

Graf hires Guenthard as new coach

BRUEHL, Germany (AP) — Heinz Guenthardt is the new coach of Steffi Graf, the No. 2 woman tennis player in the world, her father and manager Peter Graf announced. Guenthardt, former Swiss Davis Cup coach, will travel with Graf to Australia after Christmas. Graf will join Boris Becker in the Hopman Cup in Perth and will then go to Melbourne for the Australian Open. Peter Graf said. Graf parted company with Czechoslovak coach Pavel Slozil in November, following a five-year partnership.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNAH HIRSCH
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ALL THE TRICKS

East-West vulnerable. East deals.
NORTH
♠ A J 8 7 5 3 2
♥ A K
♦ A 10 9 5
♣ Void
WEST
♠ 9 6
♥ J 9 7 5 4
♦ 7 6 4 2
♣ K J 7 4 3
EAST
♠ K Q 10 4
♥ Q 10 3
♦ 8 4 2
♣ A Q 6
SOUTH
♠ Void
♥ 8 6 2
♦ K Q J 8 3
♣ 10 9 8 5 2

The bidding:
East South West North
1♠ 2♥ 3♠ 5NT
Pass 7♥ Pass Pass
Dbl Pass Pass Pass
Opening lead: Seven of ♠
There are players who have never bid and made a grand slam, some because of a reluctance to risk the considerable bonus awarded a small slam, others because they never held the cards. Grand slams, however, are not that uncommon, but to bid and make a grand slam after your opponents have opened the bidding is a rare bird indeed.

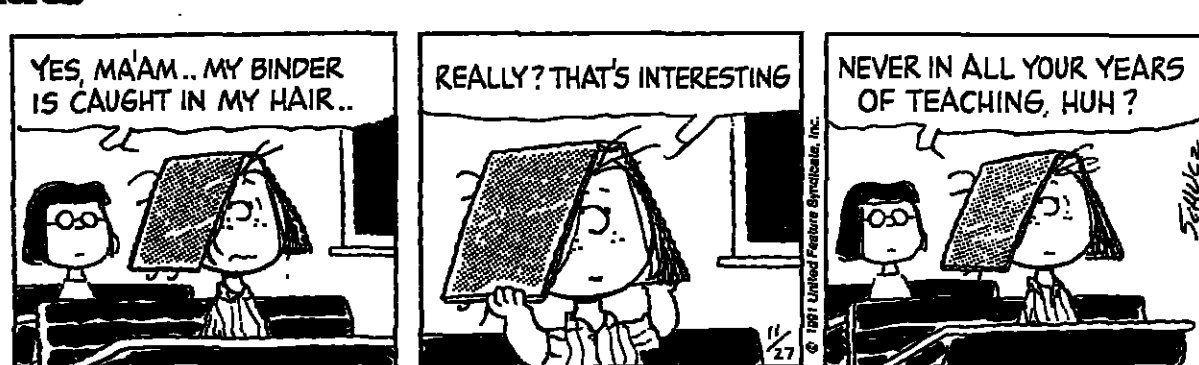
South's two diamonds was a weak jump overall. Usually, this action is taken with a six-card suit, but at this vulnerability it is not unknown for practitioners to take some liberties. North thought it highly likely that South held no more than one spade, and decided to play a grand slam if partner held both the king and queen of diamonds. Five no trump was the Grand Slam Force, asking partner to bid the grand with two of the three top honors, and South dutifully obliged. East's double was more a matter of high dudgeon than any conviction that the slam could be defeated.

Since it was obvious that North-South were bidding on distribution rather than power, West led a trump in an effort to cut down on possible ruffs. It was an intelligent choice, but not enough to defeat the contract.

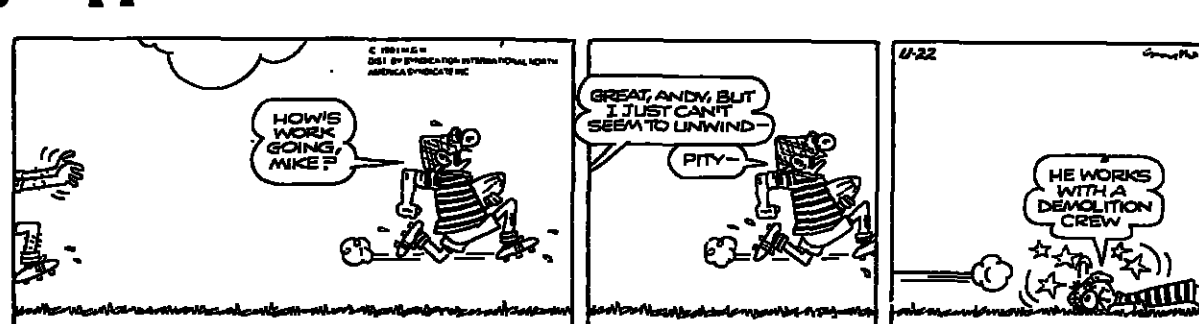
Declarer won with dummy's nine as East followed, and immediately ruffed a spade high. A heart to the king was followed by another spade ruff high, and the sight of diamonds was overtaken with the ten to permit declarer to ruff a spade with the king of trumps as West discarded a heart.

All of dummy's spades were now established. Declarer crossed to the table with a club ruff, cashed the ace of trumps to draw the last trump and the ace of spades to remove the defenders' last card in that suit. Dummy was left with nothing but winners and the doubled grand slam had rolled home with only 22 high-card points in the combined holding.

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

UNHAM
LOBO
TUSJAD
VOCENX

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

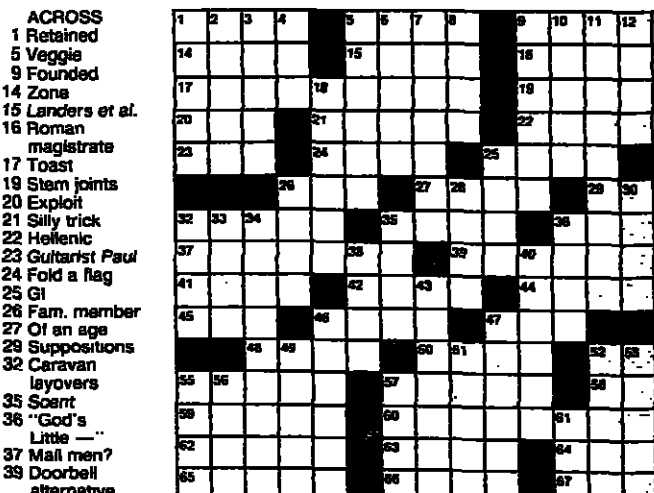
Print answer here: OF

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: PRIZE BRAVE VIRTUE CAVOIT
Answer: The snob had a high-class education, which is why he never told a "be" but he would frequently do this — "PREVARICATE"

THE Daily Crossword

by Hank Harrington



Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

ACROSS
1 Retained
5 Veggie
9 Founded
14 Zone
15 Landers et al.
16 Roman magistrate
17 Toad
19 Stem joints
20 Exploit
21 Silly trick
22 Helene
23 Gutters Paul
24 Fold a Rag
25 GI
26 Fam. member
27 Of an age
28 Suppositions
32 Caravan
33 igyovs
35 Soort
36 "God's"
37 Little —
38 Mail men?
39 Doorbell
40 alternative
41 Make over
42 Quieres
43 Motor button
45 Holy fear
46 Sluggish Musal
47 Small boy
48 Fr. head
50 Norse god
52 — Na Na
53 Ponderosa's
54 Green
57 "...on — and a prayer"
58 Children's game
59 Wipe out
60 Swindle
62 Take place
63 Sumo boss
64 Sharper
65 Number of films
66 Land —
68 Pinner
69 A Truman
60 Down
1 Afghan city
2 Having an
3 For — sake!
4 Make lace
5 College grounds
6 Indy racer
7 Having knots
8 Discern
9 — tips
10 Bedeck
11 Partners
12 Gen. Root
13 Roll-top
14 Underhead
15 Salt's story
16 Utah's flower
17 Korean soldiers
18 Loose
19 Sp. painter
20 Sumo boss
21 Over
22 Diver
23 Gr. peak
24 Served perfectly
25 London
26 gallery
27 Mandarin
28 Expertise
29 Irregular edge
30 For — sake!
31 Jack-of-all-trades
32 College grounds
33 Follow
34 Keston
35 Pinner
36 Doves
37 opponents
38 Moorehead
39 Lion people
40 White
41 Tennis name
42 Beginning
43 socialists

Financial Markets

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close	European Opening
Sterling Pound	1.5580	1.5620
Deutsche Mark	1.5359	1.5290
Swiss Franc	1.3642	1.3590
French Franc	5.2499	5.2750
Japanese Yen	127.53	127.55
European Currency Unit	1.3225	1.3275

100 Per Cent

European Opening at 8:00 a.m. GMT

Source: Reuters

Barometer Interest Rates

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	4.75	4.25	4.12	4.25
Sterling Pound	10.93	10.61	10.66	10.56
Deutsche Mark	9.75	9.75	9.56	9.56
Swiss Franc	8.50	8.57	8.37	8.10
French Franc	10.06	10.06	10.06	9.93
Japanese Yen	6.06	5.93	5.62	5.37
European Currency Unit	10.06	10.06	10.50	10.31

Marked bid rates for minimum order of U.S. Dollars 1,000.00 or equivalent.

Commodity	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	358.35	6.80	Silver	3.87	0.084

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6760	0.6760
Sterling Pound	1.2591	1.2654
Deutsche Mark	0.4421	0.4443
Swiss Franc	0.4975	0.5000
French Franc	0.1294	0.1300
Japanese Yen	0.5303	0.5330
Dutch Guilder	0.3916	0.3936
Swedish Krona	0.1209	0.1215
Italian Lira	0.0583	0.0586
Belgian Franc	0.02135	0.02146

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.7640	1.7720
Lebanese Lira	0.0765	0.0775
Saudi Riyal	0.1799	0.1806
Kuwaiti Dinar	—	—
Qatari Riyal	0.1832	0.1840
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2200
Omani Riyal	1.7305	1.7390
UAE Dirham	0.1832	0.1840
Greek Drachma	0.3735	0.3755
Cypriot Pound	1.5260	1.5390

CAS Index for Amman Financial Market

Index	21/12/1991 Close	22/12/1991 Close
All-Share	130.18	129.61
Banking Sector	107.39	106.67
Insurance Sector	128.45	128.64
Industry Sector	164.03	163.63
Services Sector	143.86	143.34

December 31, 1990 = 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at mid-session on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Monday.

One Sterling	1.8710/20	U.S. dollars
One U.S. dollar	1.5667/1	Canadian dollar
	1.5195/5205	Deutschmarks
	1.7115/25	Dutch guilders
	1.3523/33	Swiss francs
	31.24/29	Belgian francs
	15.900/2000	French francs
	1150/1151	Italian lire
	127.20/30	Japanese yen
	5.5660/5760	Swedish crowns
	6.0000/1000	Norwegian crowns
	5.9250/9300	Danish crowns
One ounce of gold	359.00/359.50	U.S. dollars

U.S. survey shows food, drink and tobacco industries leading in profits

NEW YORK (R) — Stockholders of food, beverage and tobacco companies earn returns on their investments that are almost twice the median for all industries, Forbes magazine said Sunday.

The financial magazine said companies such as Coca-Cola Co. and General Mills brought shareholders an average return of 20 per cent over the last five years, beating all other industries for the second year in a row.

Those companies showed a return on equity of 17 per cent for the latest 12 months, the report said.

The magazine ranked 1,180 American companies in 21 industries according to their five-year and 12-month average returns on equity.

The consumer nondurables in-

dustry — manufacturers of personal products such as razors, apparel and toys — was the runner-up, with a five-year average return on equity of 18 per cent.

The health industry, including pharmaceuticals companies and health care providers, placed third at 17.9 per cent. The sector was number one throughout the 1980s.

The study found the median 12-month return on shareholders' equity in all industries dropped to 9.9 per cent, compared with 12.1 per cent last year. It was the first time the figure has fallen below 10 per cent since 1972, the magazine said.

Ranked individually, Holly Corp., a small petroleum refining company based in Dallas, was ranked the most profitable U.S.

company. Forbes noted that Holly shareholders got an average return of 68.3 per cent over the last five years.

La Gear, last year's first-ranked company, slipped to fifth place after failing to make a profit in the latest 12-month period.

Some of the other profitable companies included Microsoft Corp., Nike Inc., Harley-Davidson and Philip Morris.

King World Productions ranked first in terms of efficiency, which Forbes based on profits and sales per employee and debt levels.

King World, which distributes Syndicated Television, earned almost as much as the ABC television network last year, with fewer than 500 employees on its payroll, according to the report.

Taiwan currency reserves hit record \$80 billion

TAIPEI (R) — Taiwan's foreign currency reserves, the world's largest, have soared to a new record of about \$80 billion and are still rising, central bank officials have said.

"They are climbing quite rapidly and could hit \$81 billion by the end of this year," one said.

The reserves, which stood at \$72.44 billion at the end of last year, are being swelled by Taiwan's huge trade surplus and earnings from interest.

Central bank intervention in

the foreign exchange market to slow a rise in the Taiwan dollar has also boosted the reserves, economists say.

Economic officials say the reserves will help Taiwan to finance imports of technology and machinery for an ambitious six-year, \$300 billion economic development plan that started this year.

Privately, they also say the size of the reserves is helping Taiwan gain more recognition from fore-

ign countries and break out of the international isolation caused by its diplomatic rivalry with China.

Central bank officials said the reserves would continue to increase early next year but the pace could slow because of an expected rise in imports to fuel the economic development plan.

Hanoi gives Vietnamese wider work opportunities

HANOI (R) — Vietnam, in an effort to cope with unemployment and earn more hard currency, has issued its first government regulation allowing workers to negotiate their own overseas labour contracts.

The regulation said workers could seek jobs abroad as individuals or in work teams, could transfer earnings home and would not pay more than 30 per cent of their salaries as state tax, the Vietnam News Agency (VNA) has said.

"According to the regulation, sending Vietnamese employees abroad is a measure to resolve the job problem, help them make money and increase revenue in hard currency for the country," it

said. Vietnam has sent workers in the past to the Soviet Union and eastern Europe to repay trade credits, but tens of thousands have come home in recent years and joined the ranks of the unemployed.

VNA said local workers could go abroad under agreements signed by Hanoi and other governments, by local and foreign companies or by the workers themselves with local or foreign firms.

According to official figures, nearly six per cent of Vietnam's 40-million strong labour force is unemployed. But some Western economists estimate urban unemployment at 20 per cent.

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

BOMBAY — A bullish wave swept the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) ahead of the end of calendar 1991. The BSE index leapt 41.84 points, or 2.24 per cent, to 1,915.12.

FRANKFURT — Share prices gently drifted to another lower close before a three-day holiday break. The 30-Share Dax Index finished 3.7 points lower at 1,539.62 after meandering in a five-point range.

ZURICH — Shares closed steady to slightly lower in very thin pre-holiday trading. The All-Share Swiss Performance Index shed one point to close at 1,015.6.

PARIS — A rise in French official interest rates, although widely expected, dragged the bourse to its lowest close in more than 10 months in quiet, pre-holiday trade. The CAC-40 Index fell 14.93 points, or 0.91 per cent, to 1,633.7.

LONDON — The market shrugged off alarm that the Bank of England might boost interest rates to cut sharp early losses and close just a bit lower. The 100-share FTSE Index, extending a recent slump, finished 12.7 points lower at 2,345.4.

NEW YORK — U.S. blue chips rose to new session highs in late morning trading after positive sentiment over the Federal Reserve's interest rate cut wiped out early losses. The Dow 30 average was up 9.84 points at 11.55 a.m. (1655 GMT).

Egypt announces plans to reform public sector

CAIRO (R) — Egypt announced Monday plans to reform its vast and inefficient public sector, the heart of a programme agreed with the World Bank to transform the country into a free market economy.

After nearly 40 years of state control of the economy, public sector firms employ more than a million people and account for over half the gross domestic product.

The semi-official newspaper Al-Ahram quoted Planning Minister Kamal Ganzouri as saying reforms included selling the state's share in 245 joint public-private sector ventures, privatising some "small or non-essential" public sector assets, and encouraging state firms to rent idle plants to private enterprise.

Mr. Ganzouri gave no commitment to privatise 393 companies at present wholly owned by the state and he said the government would keep full ownership of public utilities and military industries on the grounds that they were "strategic".

World Bank sources said Egypt's profitable oil industry was excluded.

But Mr. Ganzouri said public sector companies would be free to sell shares and raise capital in other ways from investors.

He said public assets would be sold to the private sector "both local and foreign" and a Western economist said recently-passed laws placed no restriction on foreign investment in Egyptian



Kamal Ganzouri

businesses.

The plans for public sector reform are part of a far-reaching programme of economic change agreed last month with the World Bank, help ease the transition.

Before the agreement could be signed and the first half of the loan released, Egypt had to pass a new public sector law and issue regulations detailing how it would be implemented.

To obtain the second half of the loan next July, holding companies independent of the government must be set up to own the public sector businesses, and two thirds of the businesses must be reconstituted as subsidiaries of the holding companies.

Other parts of the programme include liberalising prices, freeing foreign trade and clearing away bureaucratic restrictions on pri-

vate investment.

The programme dovetails with tough disciplines which Egypt has agreed with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) with the aim of providing a more stable climate for economic growth.

Egyptian and foreign economists say many questions remain about public sector reform.

Failure to appoint a minister in charge of the changes, a key provision of the new public sector law, reflects uncertainty in the government. Economists said Prime Minister Ataf Sedki took the job himself to delay the sensitive step of setting up a new, independent power centre to drive change forward.

One leading Egyptian economist, who preferred not to be named, said nothing short of full privatisation would work and listed three shortcomings of the government's plans.

He said private investors would not put money into businesses in which the state still owned majority control, they would balk at a requirement to distribute 10 per cent of profits to workers and they would not accept a requirement that workers should make up half the board of directors.

Another prominent Egyptian economist, Hazem Al Beblawi of the Export Development Bank of Egypt, said public sector reform could not sensibly start until laws on private property and commercial contracts had been clarified, the tax system simplified and higher standards set for auditors.

British trade deficit widens

LONDON (R) — Britain's trade gap widened in November despite a recession which should in theory sap demand for imports, government statistics showed Monday.

The November current deficit was £587 million (1.1 billion) last month after £561 million (\$1.05 billion) in October.

But some economists were encouraged by a tiny 1.2 per cent rise in November import values, seeing a hint of some recovery in domestic demand from lows reached in the worst of the recession.

The data offered scant Christmas cheer to Conservative Prime Minister John Major, who must call a general election next year.

The pound, on a downward curve after the German central bank raised its interest rates last week, was further jolted by the trade figures. It fell almost 1.5 pennings to 2.8395 marks.

Markets were on edge for the Bank of England to raise British interest rates to defend the pound in the European community exchange rate mechanism (ERM) currency grid.

In the event, the bank left base lending rates unchanged at 10.5 per cent Monday but fear of a rate rise gripped the stock exchange, which was down 23.6 points to 2,334.5 by midday.

Such a rise could stop a tenuous rebound from the year-long recession and hurt millions

of voters who have monthly mortgage (home loan) repayments to make.

Mr. Major's Conservatives have been running level with or just behind the opposition Labour Party in opinion polls for several months. Last week, his government introduced emergency relief measures for people who cannot pay their mortgage bills.

Some analysts wondered if a rate rise would do much to help the pound. The Conservatives are regarded as pro-business and anything appearing to damage their election hopes might be seen as bad for the currency.

Monday's figures showed the deficit on trade — excluding so-called "invisibles" like bank and insurance transfers — rose to £881 million (\$1.64 billion) from £861 million (\$1.60 billion) in October.

Underlying exports have fallen 1.5 per cent in the last three months, while imports have risen by 0.5 per cent.

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Gorbachev doubts new commonwealth can survive

ROME (Agencies) — Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev said in an interview broadcast Monday he did not believe the new Commonwealth of Independent States formed by nearly all the Soviet republics would survive.

Interviewed by Italian radio, Mr. Gorbachev also suggested he still controlled the Kremlin nuclear weapons button.

Mr. Gorbachev accused Russian President Boris Yeltsin, the driving force behind the new commonwealth, of being undemocratic and repeated calls for a final session of the Supreme Soviet to declare the Soviet Union dead.

Asked if he considered himself the head of the opposition to Mr. Yeltsin, he said: "I don't believe in this new community. I believe it cannot survive. It will not manage to create the mechanisms of coordination. I think it will lack agreement and the normal functioning of institutions, which is what we need now."

But he said he would not lead active opposition to the commonwealth for fear that this could cause more harm.

Eleven Soviet republics formed the new Commonwealth of Independent States at a meeting in the Kazakh capital of Alma-Ata Saturday and told Gorbachev that the Soviet Union and his job no longer existed.

They postponed until Dec. 30 a decision on who will control the Soviet nuclear arsenal, appointing Soviet Defence Minister Yevgeny Shaposhnikov temporary armed forces chief until that date, when republican leaders will meet to set up a permanent structure.

In the interview — taped Saturday in the Kremlin while the

Alma-Ata meeting was in progress — Mr. Gorbachev was asked: "Do you still have the briefcase with the button for the nuclear command?"

He answered: "In my briefcase there are many things that you should not know about. There are always things that it is better not to know. It is probable, however, that the atomic briefcase, which weighs a kilogramme and a half, is still with me."

Referring to his opposition to the new commonwealth, Mr. Gorbachev said: "The greatest dangers are born of the divisions of the country and I, as president, must react."

"This is my political position and my conviction. But since the Supreme Soviets of the republics have decided to (to go their own way) I don't think that I should counterpose my convictions in this difficult situation, with the risk of definitely dividing society."

Mr. Gorbachev contested the republics' declaration that the Soviet Union was dead, saying only the now-defunct Supreme Soviet could make such a decision.

"It is not reasonable to think that someone arrives, and declares that the Supreme Soviet has been liquidated, the Kremlin and all its possessions are nationalised," he said.

"Is it not indicative that the new personalities do not answer to anyone? Is this not shameful for our democratic process?" "I think that a final session of the Supreme Soviet should necessarily be held... and it will be the (Supreme) Soviet that will declare the end of the existence of the Soviet Union."

Of Mr. Yeltsin and his follow-

ers, Mr. Gorbachev said: "For me, they have poisoned the air. They have humiliated me. I can be humiliated."

Mr. Gorbachev said the events leading to formation of the commonwealth were not a coup, as some people had suggested. But he said they were unconstitutional.

"I don't think this is a coup. I'm just saying that the process of transition has to follow the constitutional course. I told Mr. Yeltsin: 'If you are democrats, if you are authentic reformers you must always act according to the laws and rules, otherwise people will ask if you are nothing but street delinquents,'" Mr. Gorbachev said.

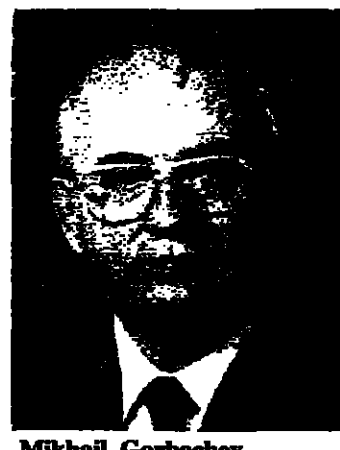
In a separate development, rebel troops seeking to oust a president they call dictatorial pummeled Georgia's parliament building with rocket and machine-gun fire Monday, stepping up a fierce power struggle in the Caucasus nation.

Georgia is the only former Soviet republic, apart from the Baltics, that has refused to join the new commonwealth. Fighting by forces vying for control of the republic broke out Sunday in Tbilisi, its capital.

Death toll estimates varied, but Mirab Kvitsashvili, Georgia's deputy health minister, said at least 18 people had been killed and 140 wounded.

The embattled president, Zviad Gamsakhurdia, was reported hiding Monday in the basement of the parliament building. Late Sunday, he rejected opposition calls for his resignation and an offer of safe passage out of Georgia.

Mr. Gamsakhurdia, a former political dissident, has been his power base erode since May



Mikhail Gorbachev

when he won a landslide victory in Georgia's first direct presidential election. Critics accuse him of closing down newspapers, denying the opposition access to television and refusing to release political prisoners.

The state-run Georgian National Information Agency reported Monday that 50 people were hurt in the fighting but claimed the situation "was under the control of the president."

In Moscow Mr. Yeltsin met Monday with Mr. Gorbachev to discuss the transition of power after Saturday's formation of the commonwealth, said Nikolai Portugolov of Mr. Gorbachev's press office.

In an apparent reference to Mr. Gorbachev's impending resignation, Mr. Portugalov said the two presidents were discussing "the time of the event that everyone is expecting."

Mr. Gorbachev has said that he would make a decision on his political future after receiving the documents from the commonwealth meeting in the Kazakh capital Alma-Ata.

Bonn recognises Croatia, Slovenia

BONN (R) — Germany formally recognised the breakaway Yugoslav republics of Croatia and Slovenia Monday, climaxing a campaign that has raised questions about Bonn's assertive role in European politics.

Germany will open diplomatic relations with the two republics on Jan. 15, the European Community's (EC) deadline for recognising all republics which live up to an EC good conduct list.

"In the view of the German government, the Republics of Slovenia and Croatia fulfil the conditions defined by the European Community," the Foreign Ministry said in a statement announcing the decision.

Under the EC conditions — agreed in a compromise to preserve the facade of unity after long debates between Germany and more cautious members — the republics must pledge to uphold democracy, respect human and minority rights and renounce the use of force to change borders.

The Foreign Ministry said the

German consuls-general in Ljubljana and Zagreb would deliver letters of recognition Monday from German President Richard von Weizsäcker.

Germany came under heavy criticism from its EC partners for its determined drive to win support for Slovenia and Croatia, which declared independence from Yugoslavia last June.

"Thousands of people have been killed since then in fighting in Croatia between Croatian forces and the republic's Serb minority, backed by Serbia and the Serbian-led federal army."

Several EC members argued that recognition could not stop the bloodshed and risked spreading the Yugoslav war to the central republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina where Croats, Serbs and Muslims live.

"We went along with Bonn in the end just to preserve some sort of foreign policy unity, not because we thought this was a good policy," a West European diplomat in Bonn said.

The unusually assertive cam-

paign also aroused concern that Germany — since unification last year by far the largest and most powerful EC state — was flexing its muscles and defending German interest after decades of restraint.

Germans have generally welcomed Chancellor Helmut Kohl's support for the two republics, which they see as upstanding Roman Catholic nations frustrated in their drive for freedom by Europe's last Communist strongmen, the Serbs.

But influential newspapers have begun to criticise Bonn for pushing ahead too quickly and angering neighbours who recalled that Nazi Germany was the strongest supporter of Croatia's fascist state during World War II.

"If Bonn isn't playing power politics, what is it doing?" The Munich daily Sueddeutsche Zeitung asked.

The march of German foreign policy has ended for the time being in a no-man's land between hope and fear," the weekly Die Zeit commented.

Aristide accepts choice of new premier

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)

— Jean-Bertrand Aristide accepted the senate's choice of the Communist Party leader to be prime minister, breaking a deadlock in talks over Mr. Aristide's return to power, officials said Sunday.

But the camp of one candidate for the post disputed the claim, and the deposed president, Mr. Aristide, was not immediately available for comment.

Senate President Dejean Belizaire said Communist Party leader Rene Theodore would head a new government that would prepare for Mr. Aristide's return. He gave no indication when that

might occur.

The announcement after two days of negotiations between Augusto Ramirez Ocampo, envoy of the Organisation of American States (OAS), and Haitian political and military leaders.

Mr. Ramirez Ocampo said Mr. Aristide authorises him to announce that he would accept Mr. Theodore as prime minister "if it is the will of the parliament majority, for it is thus that he interprets the will of the Haitian people."

Mr. Theodore, a moderate, is widely respected by Haitian politicians. Mr. Aristide previously had been reluctant to

accept the politician, who accused Mr. Aristide of abuse of power and encouraging mob violence during his seven months in office as Haiti's first democratically elected president.

Victor Benoit, a leader of a pro-Aristide coalition and possible choice for prime minister, said he had "strong doubts" that Mr. Aristide acceded to Mr. Theodore's selection.

"Until we hear directly from the mouth of President Aristide that he has chosen Theodore and not Victor Benoit, we of the National Front for Change and Democracy consider Benoit to be Aristide's choice," Mr. Benoit himself said.

Right-wing puts Mandela, De Klerk on hit list

JOHANNESBURG (Agencies)

— Right-wing extremists in South Africa are plotting to kill President F.W. de Klerk and ANC leader Nelson Mandela, police said Monday.

"We are aware of a hit list containing their names," Law and Order Minister Craig Kotte told reporters. "We are taking the threat of right-wing terrorism very seriously."

He said the start of talks on a non-racial constitution over the weekend appeared to have spurred white extremists opposed to political reform into action.

Right-wing groups have been blamed for five bomb attacks in recent days, most aimed at black or multi-racial targets. No one was wounded in the attacks but extensive damage was caused.

N.Korea announces intention to sign nuclear safeguards

SEOUL (AP) — North Korea

Monday announced its intention to sign nuclear safeguard agreements that could lead to outside inspections, but the announcement was unclear as to whether there were conditions.

It was North Korea's first official statement that it would sign the safeguards, and South Korean officials said it appeared to be a positive step towards ending the peninsula's nuclear arms race.

Seoul has said the North is within a few years of developing a nuclear weapon, and the issue is aggravating attempts to reduce lingering cold war tensions between the heavily armed Koreas.

The signing of safeguards would be the first step towards allowing inspections of suspected nuclear arms facilities and other parts of the North's nuclear programme.

The North Korean statement demanded that Washington confirm the withdrawal of its nuclear weapons from South Korea and called for direct U.S.-North Korean talks on inspections.

A U.S. congressman visiting Seoul after talks with North Korean leaders said Washington might accede to the North's demand to verify the withdrawal of nuclear weapons. Washington has in the past rejected direct talks with the North.

South Korean officials said they were confused by a key paragraph of the North Korean announcement which seemed ambiguous.

The North Korean Foreign Ministry statement said North Korea will sign a safeguards accord "on the premise" that the United States will confirm it has removed its nuclear arsenal from the South. Officials said they were confused by the wording and unsure whether it alluded to more conditions.

As international pressure has escalated on North Korea to sign the safeguards and allow inspections, the Communist nation has heaped on conditions for doing so.

The protracted delay has given the North more time to build a nuclear arsenal, U.S. officials say.

"If the nuclear issue is not

resolved," U.S. Rep. Stephan J. Solarz told a news conference, "it could lead to grave consequences... I hope I am wrong. The clock is ticking. Time is running out."

Mr. Solarz said he spent more than seven hours last week with North Korean leaders, including 2 1/2 hours with President Kim Il Sung, and left "disturbed and dismayed."

"North Korea seems more interested in avoiding a satisfactory resolution of the nuclear problem than in facilitating one," Mr. Solarz said.

In talks with Mr. Solarz Monday, President Roh Tae-woo rejected direct talks between North Korea and Washington on nuclear issues, Mr. Roh's security adviser, Kim Chong-Hui, said.

Mr. Solarz indicated that he might introduce a resolution in the U.S. Congress to bring pressure on North Korea, Mr. Kim said.

Mr. Roh declared South Korea nuclear-free last week, in effect stating that U.S. nuclear warheads had been removed. The announcement had been aimed at provoking North Korea to allow inspections.

"Hearing only the words of the South Korean chief executive, one cannot properly understand if the nuclear weapons have been withdrawn or not," said the North Korean Foreign Ministry statement.

"If it is true that U.S. nuclear weapons have been completely withdrawn, from South Korea and nuclear weapons no longer exist there as (Roh) had announced, we welcome this," it said.

Mr. Solarz, chairman of the House Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs, was the first American politician to discuss nuclear issues with the North Korean leaders since nuclear concerns escalated earlier this year.

The United States has a long-standing policy of neither confirming nor denying the location of its nuclear weapons overseas.

North and South Korea have been bitter rivals since their peninsula was divided at the end of World War II in 1945.

Universities closed after week of Cambodian protests

PHNOM PENH (R) — The

Phnom Penh government closed all universities and colleges in the Cambodian capital Monday after a weekend of violent protests that killed three people, seriously injured dozens and delayed peace moves.

"My government is afraid," an official said.

A student in front of the locked gates of Phnom Penh University, guarded by four riot policemen, said: "They closed all the universities because they were afraid the students would strike."

The engineering, technical and economics schools were shut and the medical school in the city centre was empty.

The arrest of a student at the medical school Saturday morning touched off a series of violent confrontations between students and police. Streets echoed with gunfire.

The students, who had figured in some of last week's increasing-

ly strident anti-corruption protests, stormed a police station to free their colleague, fighting hand-to-hand with officers.

Students hurled paving stones and police answered with volleys of gunfire over their heads.

In the afternoon students took over the main streets of the city, hurling stones at police, and in the evening attacked two police stations. It was then that the army was called out and the sound of heavy gunfire filled the night.

One student was shot in the chest as he and his comrades set fire to a police station. Another civilian and a soldier died from gunshot wounds, doctors and officials said.

The government Sunday announced an 8 p.m. to 5 a.m. curfew. Gunfire was heard later that night.

Foreign Minister Hor Namhong said protests would not need government permission.

Bush says 1991 was a year of mixed emotions

WASHINGTON (AP) — President

George Bush says "the agony of a very slow economy" has made 1991 a year of mixed emotions after victory in the Gulf war and the growth of democracy in Eastern Europe.

"Trying to cope with this economy is extraordinarily difficult," Mr. Bush told C-Span, the cable television industry's Public Service Channel.

But Mr. Bush, in an interview taped Friday and broadcast Sunday, cautioned critics not to count him out, despite his recent plunge in the polls.

That decline has just gotten "the competitive juices" flowing, said Mr. Bush. "I like the combat."

Mr. Bush, who has already raised millions of dollars for his 1992 re-election race, said: "I've been underestimated before and they ought not to underestimate me again because I'm going to take my case out to the American people, get this economy turned around and I'll be ready."

The president described 1991 as "a year of mixed emotions... A year of up and down."

Dramatic changes abroad made this "a more peaceful world for our kids to grow up in," he said, adding that there was also "the agony of a very slow economy at home that hurt a lot of good people."

Mr. Bush called the Federal Reserve Board's 1 percentage point cut in the discount rate, to 3.5 per cent — its lowest level in 27 years — "very good news... which should have a stimulative effect on the economy."

Mr. Bush said he relishes the challenges of the presidency.

"Trying to cope with this eco-

nomy is extraordinarily difficult," he said. "I'm determined to succeed, but I learned firsthand in 1991 that the buck does stop there on that desk — and properly so."

On other topics, Mr. Bush: — Said he wouldn't trade the American system for Britain's parliamentary government.

"I count by blessings for the fact I don't have to go into that pit that John Major stands in, nose-to-nose with the opposition, all yelling at each other."

— Crowded about his good health.

"Exercise is very important for me... I'm blessed with a tremendous amount of energy," he said.

"I love competitive sports," added the 67-year-old president. "I can't wait for Christmas Day at Camp David to whip up on the Marines up there with my three sons as the Bush volleyball team goes back into action."

"Wallyball" is volleyball played indoors on a racquetball court. And, the president vowed: "I'm not going to be driven off the golf course... I can do two things at once: Mind the country's business and then every once in a while, play golf."

— Shrugged off New York Gov. Mario Cuomo's decision to skip the Democratic presidential race. The other Democrats, Mr. Bush said, were never going to "roll over and play dead" for Mr. Cuomo.

"I respect his decision. And in spite of the fact we yell about each other from time to time, we get along all right," he said.

— Said he likes frequent, informal news conferences: "It lances the sores that build up if you're

unavailable."

— Called hunger in America "a tragedy" but said, "there have always been homeless, there always have been those hungry, even in affluent countries like ours."

Meanwhile, two Democratic presidential aspirants charged Sunday that Mr. Bush has shirked responsibility and "is making the American people feel like losers."

Gov. Bill Clinton of Arkansas, asked if he was not blaming the president for the state of the economy, replied:

"Well, I think the president was in the driver's seat, and the thing that bothers me about it is the way he's denigrated the idea of having a vision for the country. He has refused to accept any responsibility."

Sen. Bob Kerrey of Nebraska said: "At the end of the cold war, President Bush is making the American people feel like losers, but we're not losers."

Mr. Clinton was interviewed by the ABC Network, and Mr. Kerrey by CBS.

In a separate development, David Duke and Pat Buchanan are complaining that hostility toward their dark horse candidacies from establishment Republicans is keeping them off some state primary ballots.

Not surprisingly, their protests aren't generating much sympathy from party leaders or state election officials.

Mr. Buchanan, a conservative

columnist and television commentator, claims he was squeezed off the Feb. 25 ballot in South Dakota by unfriendly state Republican leaders.

Mr. Duke, a Louisiana legislator, former Ku Klux Klan leader and neo-Nazi who unsuccessfully ran for governor and the U.S. Senate, has been denounced by Republican officials up to and including President Bush as a bigot and racist.

Mr. Duke, who vowed to challenge Mr. Bush in all primaries but New Hampshire, is countering Republican efforts to thwart his listing on ballots in Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Oregon, Georgia, Florida and Wisconsin.

In Michigan, Maryland and other states, party leaders have lost bids to keep Mr. Duke off the ballot but vowed to work hard for his defeat.

"In some states, party officials are breaking the law and in some other states, legislatures have passed laws that are just blatantly unfair and unconstitutional," said Mark Ellis, a spokesman for Mr. Duke in Louisiana.

"In Russia and Eastern Europe they just threw out a system where the party bosses have total control. In America, we're moving toward this kind of system."

Although Mr. Buchanan hasn't encountered the same concerted Republican effort to keep him off ballots, he's still protesting the tactics.

"Let's stop calling fouls and kicking guys out of the game. Let the boys play," Mr. Buchanan said.

"If I can find a couple of primaries where I can meet David Duke and demonstrate who is the authentic conservative and who is the bogus, I think that's much better. It's much better for the party," he added.

State laws vary widely in spell-

ing out how to qualify for presidential primary ballots. Some states require petitions with a certain number of signatures, while some delegate the responsibility to party officials.

In some other states, only candidates who are seriously covered in the national news media can win a berth on the ballot.

Candidates denied a spot in some primaries can usually force their way onto the ballot by collecting enough petition signatures — a tactic Duke supporters are using.

Party leaders at the state and national levels do little to disguise their contempt for Mr. Duke.

"We don't call state party officials and tell them to try to keep Duke off the ballot. They call us," said B. Jay Cooper, a Republican National Committee official.

"In those states where they have the option of keeping Duke off the ballot, we're not discouraging that," he said.

"We've taken our position on Duke and on racism and anti-Semitism. The man is just an ugly man. We're going to be consistent in our position against him," he added.

But Mr. Cooper said the party is following a different approach with Mr. Buchanan and isn't encouraging party leaders to exclude him from any ballots. He's off the ballot in South Dakota because "he just missed the deadline," Mr. Cooper said.

National party leaders stress that while they don't put Mr. Buchanan in the same category as Mr. Duke, they're not about to make his challenge to Mr. Bush any easier.

COLUMN 8

Stolen jawbone of Saint Anthony returned to church

PADUA, Italy, (R) — A 13th century Christian relic, the jawbone of orator-Saint Anthony, was returned to a church in the north Italian town of Padua Sunday, two months after being stolen by masked bandits. Police recovered the relic near Rome's Fiumicino Airport Friday, before it was apparently due to be flown out of the country. Three thieves took the relic in its gold-plated silver cup, inside with rubies and sapphires and worth around 100 million lire (\$30,000), at gunpoint from the Basilica of St. Anthony in October. Two policemen carried the relic through cheering crowds into the church Sunday and a special mass was conducted to celebrate its safe return. St. Anthony, a Franciscan born in Lisbon in 1195, was famed for his gift of oratory said to bring sinners to their knees. He spent many years in Padua, where he died in 1231.

Traffic cops say it with flowers

WELLINGTON (R) — New Zealand Traffic Police, much maligned like their colleagues around the world, awarded carnations instead of tickets to motorists Monday as a way of thanking well-behaved drivers. As a Christmas goodwill gesture, traffic officers stopped motorists and gave them a carnation. Senior Sergeant Paul Kennedy said: "Too often we are doing something about people who do things wrong on the road. Today's the day for those who are driving safely."

France relaxes christening rules

PARIS (R) — Antiquated French rules governing the names parents may give to their children are to be relaxed to cater for off-beat modern tastes and the population's more cosmopolitan make-up, government officials said Saturday. Legislation in force since the 1789 revolution had allowed civil registrars to reject names not taken from the calendar of Catholic saints or historical figures. The new rules, approved by the cabinet and still to be debated in parliament, are intended to take account of the preferences of atheist families or families of foreign extraction. Parents will be allowed to use any name which is not judged to make the child an object of ridicule. Adults with embarrassing names will find it easier to change them. The rules, drawn up by Junior Justice Minister Michel Sapin, also give children born out of wedlock the same rights of inheritance as legitimate children.

Natalie Cole's mother couldn't be happier

NEW YORK (AP) — Natalie Cole's mother couldn't be happier about her daughter's success with an album of Nat King Cole standards. She just doesn't want to hear it. "I'm very happy about what it's done for her career and for my husband's," Maria Cole says in this Sunday's USA Weekend magazine. "But still, I don't like to listen to (Natalie's versions). I just feel that everything belonged to him." Natalie's Unforgettable album, with 24 cuts of her late father's songs, hit No. 1 on billboard charts this year and has sold more than 3 million copies. Her mother's feelings about the album run so deep she broke down in the recording studio when her 41-year-old daughter recorded her "duet" with Nat King Cole on Unforgettable. Natalie's voice was added to her father's classic version of the song. "I could only stay 45 minutes," says Maria Cole, whose husband died in 1965. "It evokes such memories for me. I hope she understands."

Florence bans daytime traffic

FLORENCE (R) — Florence will be closed to private cars during the day throughout January in an attempt to combat worsening air pollution, a city spokesman said Sunday. The daily ban from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. due to start on Jan. 2, is the most drastic of anti-pollution measures taken by several Italian cities in recent days. Rome, Milan and Naples have operated a system of alternate licence plates this week — cars with odd-numbered plates being excluded one day and those with even numbers barred the next. Air pollution has been aggravated by cold, windless conditions and fog.

05.1 on 1/24